CHRIST and the WORLD at WAR

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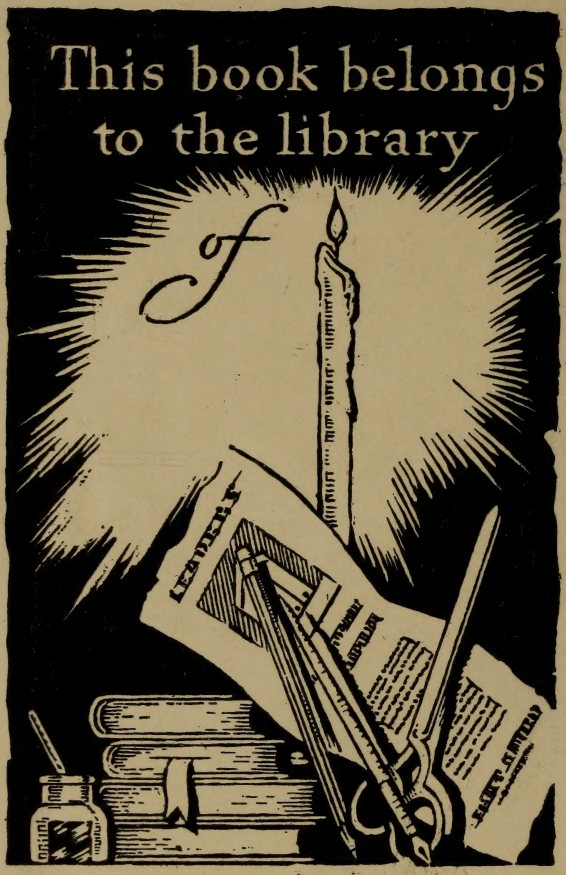
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CHRIST: AND THE WORLD AT WAR

CHRIST: AND THE WORLD AT WAR

SERMONS PREACHED IN WAR-TIME BY

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY
THE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER
THE BISHOP OF LONDON
THE DEAN OF ST. PAUL'S
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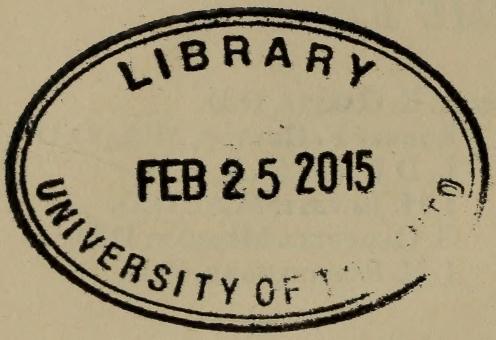
EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION, BY
BASIL MATHEWS, M.A.

THE PILGRIM PRESS
BOSTON CHICAGO



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BY FRANK M. SHELDON

THE PILGRIM PRESS
BOSTON

PROLOGUE

THIS book is produced in response to a definite request from a neutral country in Europe.

Thoughtful men in that country wish to know what is the normal religious outlook of Christian folk in Britain as expressed through the responsible leaders of the Churches. What is desired is not pronouncements on ecclesiastical issues, nor official utterances, but the natural, spontaneous thought of Christian leaders faced by congregations of average citizens feeling the needs common to belligerent humanity in war-time.

For that reason this book is composed entirely of sermons and addresses taken down verbatim in shorthand or printed from the manuscript from which they were delivered. In every case they were spoken without any idea of publication. They are such sermons as any vagrant listener might hear on six successive Sundays from different pulpits in London. Gratitude is due to the men who in every case have so freely expressed their willingness for their utterances to be used in this way.

The value of the book, then, paradoxically, lies largely in the fact that the sermons are not exceptional. They are the average voice of our British Christian leadership. They represent almost as many different types as there are sermons. Every reader who knows the British pulpit of to-day will ask, as he looks through the Contents, "Why was not some sermon by Dr. —— or Canon ——

included? He is more profound (or brilliant, or impressive, or eloquent, as the case may be) than Bishop ——, who is included."

The reply is that — while two or three inevitable names are not present because no sermons of theirs were available — a full dozen of such books as this might be produced, never duplicating, yet still leaving the field only half gleaned. The book stands, not as exhaustive, nor even as giving the acme of contemporary brilliancy and scholarship, but as representative of our normal accepted leadership in its mingled strength and weakness. It is hoped that at least one other book may follow, representative of the point of view of the younger element in British Christian leadership to-day.

Nor is the book taken up solely with war subjects. Those issues which the war has thrown into such prominence — the thoughts of death and the future life, the questions as to the essential nature of the Gospel, the problems of establishing by missionary enterprise a world-wide Kingdom of God — find their place here.

The request for the issue of such a volume is natural. It is right that men should expect from the Christian pulpit a vision and a leadership. In the tremendous world-debate of the War, the Church of Christ should have some relevant — even some final — word to utter.

For, in the last resort, the deeper issues of this war lie in the very realm in which the Church should be authoritative if it is ever to speak any decisive word. The clash of armies and the drum-fire of gun are not absolute; they are tools of the human

spirit, instruments of moral forces. Indeed, in spite of all the confused welter of the War, it has become increasingly clear as each successive act of the drama has developed, that every belligerent is ultimately fighting for a doctrine. We are all, also, using our armies and navies to destroy a doctrine as organized into a system and as expressed in a State policy both in war and in peace.

Our war aims, then, can all be reduced ultimately to *formulæ* stated in ethical terms. The origins and the aims of our belligerency have to do with the relationships of men, as expressed in such moral terms as justice, the freedom of small and great nationalities, equality of opportunity, reverence for womanhood, childhood and age, equity, goodwill, and the like. And the authority of such moral principles as these reposes on our view of the ultimate government of the universe. In a word, the hidden root-issues of the world's life, which the war has now revealed with startling distinctness, lie in the region of morals and religion. They therefore fall clearly within the realm of the Christian Church. What is more, Christ has already in His pierced hands the solution of all our problems of war and of peace, of social injustice, of commerce, of national, international and inter-racial relationship, and of individual life.

The practical bearing of this is at once urgent and universal. It is not the function of the Christian Church, as such, to draft political programmes or to erect international organizations, but it is her duty to make men who will do these things. If, as Lord Acton has said, " Ideas are the cause and not

the result of public events," and if the Christian Church has the Divine Idea that is so revolutionary and creative that it can change the world, then she holds the key to the future and is bound to proclaim that Divine Idea everywhere.

That is her *mêtier*. She stands or falls by her power to leaven the world, *i.e.*, to change its nature by permeating it with her life. The war has incalculably intensified the urgency of her task and has widened the boundaries of her opportunity. With the entry of America and then China into the war, the last of the great races of the world has been swept into the maelstrom. Not only is every considerable race on earth engaged in the war, but the future of every nation will be determined by its issue. If the Christian Church has no voice here she can never have any voice anywhere.

If what Lord Bryce and General Smuts have said in facing this world-situation is true, that "We must begin with a change in the hearts of men," it is clear that the Church fails unless she gives to her sons a strong, prophetic, energetic word that will in them set the standard for the building of the new world which lies beyond the war. She must have and proclaim a supernatural and supernational *welt-politik* with the Kingdom of Heaven on earth as its objective.

Set in that tremendous world-context, the Church to-day seems externally to be relatively powerless. She is busy and earnest, yet seems impotent. But she is not so powerless as she seems. And, in any case, she alone has always at hand and available, if she will but take it, all the Power there is. The

whole tragic record of the war confirms Professor Henry Jones's prophecy that "humanity will never again rest at the feet of the natural man." The Christian Gospel has the central secret for saving the world of the future. For "Nothing but Christianity," as Lord Bryce has said, "can eventually secure the world's peace."

This book does not contain such an authoritative word in its fulness as the world needs. Yet what is here would change the world if it were woven into the life of the world. The volume, then, is dedicated as an infinitesimal contribution — yet definitely as a contribution — to the working out of the world-issues which the war has created. Issued in differing languages in a number of the countries of Europe, in America and within the British Empire, this book will even reach the fringes of Asia and Africa. Just because of its weakness as well as its strength, and most of all because of the Divine commonplaces of the Christian Gospel which it contains, the book may come to be used as a stimulus through which a fellowship in the impulse of that Gospel may unconsciously develop in different parts of the world. This book would achieve the aim for which all those who contribute to it live if it were used, in the agony of war, to help forward by a single second of time the building of the City of God, whose emblem is the Cross, whose foundations are justice and truth and mercy, and whose walls must ultimately embrace all humanity.

BASIL MATHEWS.

BOARS HILL, OXFORD,
August 28, 1917.

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A Londoner by birth, was educated at the Midland College, Nottingham, and then at Berlin and Halle Universities. He married a German lady, the daughter of a famous Court painter. Since 1901 he has exercised an increasingly influential ministry in Derby, and Highgate and Hampstead, London. An old student under Dr. Harnack, Mr. Rushbrooke was Dr. Harnack's guide and interpreter on his visit to England some years ago.

Mr. Rushbrooke went to Berlin with the English pastors in the scheme for developing friendship and was at the Constance Peace Conference when war broke out. He went back to Berlin, where his wife was staying and was detained there for some weeks before being able to travel back to England.

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CHRIST: AND THE WORLD AT WAR

REDEEMING THE TIME

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." — *Eph.* v. 16.

IN modern literature, faith and knowledge are not infrequently set over against one another, almost like enemies in battle array. In an imperishable page of historic fiction Victor Hugo depicts the midnight visit of the disguised King Louis XI. to the ecclesiastical philosopher of Nôtre Dame, in the dawn of the Renaissance. In the flash of epigram and repartee the author compares and contrasts the then dominant forces in human life and history. The printing press has sprung into life full-armed, for service in the midst of a Europe wherein the reins both of government and of thought have been persistently in the Church's hands. You will recall the dramatic moment when the priest, trembling with excitement and aglow with what he regards as prophetic fire, casts open the window and, pointing first to the printed page upon the table and then to the towers of Nôtre Dame standing clear-cut in the moonlight, exclaims with a mingling of enthusiasm and dread, "Ceci tuera cela!" What

Nôtre Dame stands for must, he thinks, go down before the new thing which the printed page is going to bring to men.

More than four centuries have passed since then and the printed page has done its work and won its victories beyond the furthest dream of its inceptors. But that prophecy — has it come true? Has the essence of what the Cathedral stood for, stands for, lost its force? Or has it rather found and strengthened its true place, its rightful hold upon the minds of men? *Circumspice.* We, whose outward bond of fellowship lies in the joint acquisition of human knowledge — the use, we may almost say, of the printed page — what are we here for this evening? To pray, with bowed head and high resolve, to pray with loyalty and hope, within the walls of the Church of the living God as He is revealed to us in Jesus Christ.

I do not dwell upon those thoughts. I have a more practical aim. But in thankful recognition of the gift which has come to our day of a truer understanding as to the relative and joint claim or appeal which Faith and Science, human knowledge and Divine Revelation, make to every one of us, I should like to quote a single paragraph from a lecture delivered three years ago under the auspices of London University by one of the most fearless thinkers and physiologists of to-day. He is speaking of the philosophers Heine and Kant, and he says:—

"Those who have read Heine's 'Deutschland' will remember his account, scintillating with the flashes of his wonderful literary genius, of Immanuel Kant, whom he represented as the Robespierre of

an intellectual revolution far more wide-reaching in its effects than the French Revolution. The victim of this intellectual revolution was pictured as no mere earthly king, but the God of Hebrew and Christian tradition. 'I can hear the bell. Kneel down. They are bringing the sacraments to a dying God.' Heine was right (the lecturer goes on to say) in his estimate of the importance of Kant's work. But it was the God of Materialism, and not of Christianity, that was dying."*

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." The words come from one of the letters which the Apostle wrote from a Roman prison in the eventide of his life and work. Take these letters together, or take even this single letter, addressed to the disciples in Ephesus (or more probably in other places too), and the purport of his message can be easily described. He had fought a hard battle for a cause very near his heart, and he had won. He had established, so that it could not be any more gainsaid, the truth that the message of Jesus Christ and the Lordship of Jesus Christ were not to be narrowly limited and that His Society was a Society for mankind. The test of nationality, the test of circumcision, the distinction of bond or free, of male or female, had for the new faith, the new society, no discriminating differentiating force. "Ye are all one in Christ Jesus." The Jew who has become a member of Christ's Society may still observe a score of Jewish rules, but the Gentile, for whom these rules have no force, is as true and loyal a Christian as his Jewish brother. Under

* J. S. Haldane, "Mechanism, Life and Personality," p. 129.

this charter of freedom, he says, there is laid upon you all together a new charge, a new and splendid trust, and for the right discharge of it every sort of diverse gift and power is wanted. I beseech you to walk worthy of so great a calling. You are witnesses for Him in a world which, for the most part, knows Him not. Rise to that call. You have a ceaseless battle to fight against evil of every kind. It is a battle between light and darkness. But you can wage that fight and win. Go forward; "redeeming the time, because the days are evil." "Redeeming the time." The Greek words have been variously translated and explained. Surely the most straightforward and literal meaning is the best. "Redeem the time." Claim the present for the best uses. It has got, so to speak, into wrong hands — the days are evil days — but you can redeem them, buy them back into what is good. To do it will need thought. It will need work. It will need sacrifice. But it is possible. Therefore it is right. So he told the men and women of the Christian Society in those great cities nearly nineteen centuries ago. So he tells the men and women of the Christian Society in England to-day. And verily for us too in this year of grace 1916 "the days are evil." How can people who are sufficiently earnest and public-spirited to care about the matter — and sufficiently intelligent and educated to think about it — and sufficiently Christian to pray about it — how, in short, can you to whom I speak "redeem the time" just now?

First we must try to understand why and how the days are evil and how they became so. How did a war like this, greater in scale and more sangui-

nary in character than any that the world has seen, become possible among nominally Christian peoples? How (for that should be our primary thought) have we ourselves been in past years party to the growing mischief? Are the horrors of these tremendous months uprooting or withering what there was in us that was amiss, or are they leaving it baneful as before? Can they possibly be even accentuating it? We were beyond question lovers of peace. But if the ideal to which peace contributes, and for which we seek peace and ensue it, is simply the undisturbed enjoyment of the good things of life, then the love of peace can hardly be called either robust or meritorious. It was finely said a few weeks ago that:—

"The religion of peace cannot hold its ground unless it is prepared, when occasion arises, to transform itself into the religion of strife. That such occasions do arise is a fact written large in all moral experience. They are the moments, familiar I suppose to most of us, when a man must say to his soul, 'Fight *now*, fight to the uttermost, resisting, it may be, even unto blood, or peace shall never visit thee any more.' They occur to communities also, but at rarer intervals. They are the moments when nations and empires are put to the test; when they must prove, by the tenor of their response, what vocation they have in the moral order of the world, or whether they have any vocation at all. When this happens religion uncovers its other face. The peace of God which passeth understanding summons its partner in the education of the soul — the strife of God which passeth understanding also."*

* Rev. L. P. Jacks in *The Hibbert Journal*, April, 1916.

Let no one therefore deceive himself or herself with the thought that a mere hatred of strife can or will, by itself amend what has been amiss. A pacifism of that sort may be the very opposite to "redeeming the time."

Out of the horrid crucible of war there must emerge, nay, there is already emerging, for those who have eyes to see, a truer knowledge of good and evil, a more keen appraising of our standards of conduct as peoples or as men and women. We are seeing, as some of us failed to see clearly before, how perilously easy it is for the noble plant of loyal patriotism, if it be wrongly nurtured, to degenerate into a coarse and baneful tree, and the sight of that catastrophe will put us on our guard lest in thought or word or vote or song, about the Empire and its power, we let the ideal of a great trust for the good of all get coarsened or degraded to a rougher shape or a lower level, until the things which should have been for our weal, and can rightly be for the world's weal, become unto us an occasion of falling. Redeem the time, then, for the days are evil.

Or, again, it would be calamitous indeed if, when we at length emerge scathed and seared, but, please God, victorious, from out the welter of the war — emerge with very many of our best and bravest gone from this world's tasks and love and opportunity, and ourselves fresh-fashioned for new or unfamiliar paths — it would be calamitous were we to enter upon the new conditions with an alteration for the worse in our Christian temper. It should be, and I am certain that it can be, just the reverse. We have, in

great groups of different classes and grades, been drawn together as never before. There is a new fellowship of interest, of sacrifice, of sorrow, even of skilled and unskilled handiwork. That fellowship has grown steadily stronger in the months of war, and notably in these latest months, and the change ought to be, and can be, altogether to the good. It has quietly abolished obstinate little sundering walls of mutual ignorance or suspicion which could scarcely have been removed by force, and which, once they are gone, will, please God, never reappear. That is only one of many ways in which the fellowship of Christ's Society on earth is being bettered in these dark days. We are acquiring, too, as I believe, a hitherto unwonted power of self-denial. We are learning what is best of all, a readier recourse to prayer. But we dare not forget that we have to reckon with perils as well as gains, and if the time is to be redeemed we must be on the watch against the growth in ourselves of un-Christian modes of thought which would have been intolerable a few years ago, but are, I am afraid, not quite intolerable to us now. It must almost perforce be hurtful to us to be reading day by day about horrors which rightfully stir our wrath, and the recurrent stir may very easily fashion a bitterness of temper far removed from really righteous wrath. By all means let us carefully and quietly clear our thoughts as to what are right principles and what are wrong, in the motives or the actions of a people or a man; and when once we have found where the underlying mischief lies, and seen the "naked evil shorn of the trappings which disguise it

with the appearance of good," then we do right to "hate it hard," so long as we continue to be thoughtful men and women capable of deliberately hating it and of deliberately loving its opposite. But in these thoughts and resolves we are handling edged tools, and we must be alert and on our guard. Hatred of what is bluntly nakedly evil in motive or act may drift and harden imperceptibly into a self-righteous hatred of our fellow men — poor, fallible, temper-driven, mistaken men like ourselves, though perhaps with different temptations — and we may go on to make our wrath so sweeping, so undiscriminating, that we condemn and denounce in others even things which we should possibly condone or even justify if we were to do them ourselves. So subtly, so imperceptibly, may the poison work within us. There is a righteous hate, and there is a most unrighteous hate. The time gives opportunity for each. Redeem the time because the days are evil.

Once again, be on your guard against a peril not so subtle and very real indeed. I mean the loss of trust in our Father's love, a loss engendered by the frequency, the inexplicableness, and the deep pathos of our sorrows. It is indeed felt in countless English homes this year that "the days are evil" as we mourn the loss of strong, bright lives to which, in their riper development, we have looked forward as certain to become the people's strength and stand-by in the years of difficulty which lie ahead. There is probably no man or woman here but has such instances in mind at this moment. Is it surprising that from one stricken home after another

the questioning thought should arise: Can we honestly speak of, speak to, a God, at once omnipotent and loving, in face of all this? My friends, not here and now can we enter upon that great sea of thought, bewilderment, inquiry, wonder, hope. The questioning can receive no brief, clear-cut, categorical satisfying reply. It is our poor finite powers which are at fault. Fashion for yourself, if you think you can, some supposed solution other than that on which we have learned, though with outstretched hands and with hopes still unsatisfied, to rest. Try to fashion that solution of yours, and you will find that you must first get rid of, or set aside, or explain away, the greater part of the New Testament. There is something presupposed throughout, something underlying, the Lord's own word and acts — teaching and parable, miracle and promise — without which that record would lose its coherence and its force, I had almost said would lose its whole meaning, and with which the clue — not, of course, a full explanation, but the clue — stands there, in every page, and stands here to-day for us who with stricken hearts can trust Him still. We are sure — instinctively sure — beyond range of doubt — may we not say so? — that this life is not all, that no stroke of sword or bullet can bring those powers to their eternal close. "It would take more than that to stop the chap we loved so," writes a soldier of his comrade who had fallen.

"And this we know: Death is not Life effete,
Life crushed, the broken pail. We who have seen
So marvellous things know well the end not yet." *

C. H. Sorley, "Marlborough and other Poems."

We are not going to sully or drag down the splendour of such a lad's self-sacrifice by an unintelligent, an unfaithful, almost a selfish grief. I have only touched this great problem, not handled it. But we must bear in mind the plain peril of that unfaith, if, in hours so dark as those which are shadowing countless homes, in "days so evil," we would bravely and intelligently "redeem the time."

Brothers and sisters, there is in all this nothing very distinctive of our University gathering, of our University needs. But the connecting link is this. The responsibility for English life at such an hour rests largely with those who will think as well as pray. None of us, none of our sires or grandsires, has known a time when the demand for thoughtfulness was comparable to what it is to-day. We have a call of absolute indisputable duty. Every one of us must give his, must give her, answer unswervingly, if we are not to set back the progress from strength to strength of whatsoever things in the world's life are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report. But, if the task is to be done aright, the self-offering, the self-discipline must be quiet, deliberate, thorough, in things great and small. The days are evil, the time must be redeemed. Our Church of England is setting itself in these months of strain to the task of deepening, strengthening, uplifting the Christian thought, the Christian life, of the English people. We plan throughout the land a Mission to the Nation, a Mission of Repentance and Hope. We want to learn better how to pray together. We want to make our fellowship in the Lord's great sacramental rite a firmer bond, a more

stimulating force than it has ever been before. We want our men when they return from war to find a new value, a new strength, a new sunshine, in the homes they left. We believe it can be done. But, if so, it must be because those who not only care but think are giving themselves to that large endeavour, are redeeming the time because the days are evil. And time presses. It would be a vain fancy were we to imagine that when in God's mercy the war is over we shall have a quiet time for easy and generous reconstruction in English life. Not so. My forecast is that the difficulty of planning and fashioning new things will be far greater than we realise, and that our power of doing it — and do it we must — will depend upon whether, in the midst of all the war and its dread concomitants, we have given our mind — yes, mind as well as heart —to these new and brave resolves.

A century hence, or two centuries hence, someone will be writing a noteworthy history of this great time, writing it from a standpoint sufficiently far off from the hurly-burly to view the whole story in its true proportions. What will he have to say as to the part taken, the tone set, by the best thinkers among our own people — the men and women whose home is at the very centre of the Empire's life? A vision rises to my mind's eye of what I should like that historian to be able to say. Is it possible that he might truthfully tell in that solemn year, while guns were still thundering and bombs and submarines were doing their deadly work, while men's muscles were tense and their eyes and ears alert, the plans began to take shape for the

better things which were to come after? They were manifold, those plans, and among them this: the marshalling in London, at the world's centre, of the company of men and women who could best fashion and constitute a great popular University, fashion it in this vast city which has in its keeping, available for all, the noblest treasures of art and literature and science, the noblest hospitals, the noblest traditions of civic life — fashion it as the Imperial centre of learning, sacred as well as secular, on the broadest conceivable basis, the centre to which the best of the young men and women from all the Dominions can come; a University so splendidly equipped and housed as to symbolise the citizens' care for what is worth most in a nation's and an empire's life; a standing protest before God and man against mere money-making and the pursuit of pleasure. I seem to see in dim outline such a possibility as one great part of our people's reconstructed plan, when the guns at last are silent, and the intolerable waste of war is at an end. Is the hope a visionary or baseless dream? To me it seems a part of yet wider, grander, more sacred ranges which rise and rise afar off.

"Dreamers of dreams? We take the taunt with gladness,
Knowing that God, beyond the years you see,
Has wrought the dreams that count with you for madness
Into the substance of the world to be."

THE WORLD AT THE CROSS-ROADS.

By E. S. Talbot, D.D., Bishop of Winchester.

"The street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times." — *Dan.* ix. 25.

"Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes." — *Isa.* liv. 2.

An author of some distinction in the literature of fiction said the other day, speaking both for himself and for a friend who is known throughout the English-speaking world, "We feel unable to write now. Things are too big for us." There is reverence in that speech, such reverence as was more outspoken yet in the ancient holy Word. "Be still, and know that I am God." "Let all the earth keep silence before Him." "Thy way is in the sea, and Thy paths in the great waters, and Thy footsteps are not known."

Yet at such a time as this the true attitude of the Church is, I suppose, that of Habakkuk, "I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will look forth to see what He will speak to me." Nor can that expectancy be wholly silent. There may rightly be some attempt to discern the signs of the times. Least of all can this be wrong if in straining to see new indications of God's purpose we guide ourselves by remembrance of His works and wonders in old time and by the knowledge which He has given us of His abiding purposes.

Christ: and the World at War

The cause of missions, the cause of the Gospel, suffers heavily to-day. The auspices may seem against us, but were things brighter, we may ask, 117 years ago, when our fathers* took up, with the gallantry of Christian men, the forlorn hope of evangelisation? What in those days was the home base? What, then, were the instruments and methods available? What were the open doors and highways of civilisation? The contrast is full of heartening suggestion. All the same, things are not to-day the same. These are indeed troublous times. We must not deny it, nor ignore it, nor miss, as the world so strangely does, the signs of God's chastening hand. Missionaries in places are interned or impeded, communications are poorer and more perilous, reinforcements must needs be smaller, and many who would have been our volunteers have heard the sterner call of war. Some will never return to take up their purposed work, while others, we hope, will gain help from the experience of earthly chivalry. Many of our women have heard the call of suffering, too loud to be ignored.

We cannot forget that Europe, the great and age-long trustee of the Gospel, has become also Europe the great stumbling-block or scandal of it. What must the nations say and think of Christendom — Christian people tearing out each other's vitals, the Christian spirit and the Church which embodies it wholly unable to forbid, or to stay, or even to mitigate the strife, force worshipped and triumphant? and, above all, a spirit of hatred and even a glorification of that spirit is almost the new com-

* The founders of the Church Missionary Society.

mandment of the latest age, Christian ministers uttering words of deadly rancour. These things must tell for evil, must perplex and baffle the friendly, must give great occasion to the hostile. The name of Christ is blasphemed through us. Heathenism may well reply to our missionary call, "Physician, heal thyself."

Perhaps there is more yet to be reckoned in. Are our own thoughts in part absorbed by the reports and anxieties and efforts of the war? our prayers, which might have gone up for the great missionary cause, displaced for those most needed through the fears and hopes of this appalling struggle? The outlook is clouded, the hindrances real.

Yet I know that I speak true when I say that to the question, "Are you discouraged?" there comes up from your hearts the genuine and unaffected answer, "No." If that reply was prompted only by the instincts of faith and simple duty, it would still be worth much, breathing as it does the spirit of witnessing to the power of a kingdom — if I may borrow a word — "whose banner, torn yet flowing, streams like the thunderstorm against the wind."

But I submit to you that that response of yours is more than instinctive. In a time of shock the things that are not shaken will remain. Can we already see the grounds of reason which justify, at least in part, that instinct? I believe that we can. Let us, then, consider and take this for our problem.

First, we have emerged from a period before the war of ease and contentedness and apparent security, one of those times in which men say, "To-morrow shall be as this day and yet more abundant, when

the earth sitteth still and is at rest"; a time when an unenlightened present feels able to look with complacency on the strifes and tragedies of the past, when civilisation seems to stand by its own equipoise and solidity. There are no times more dangerous than those. They put statesmen off their guard. They conceal the strength and possibilities of evil. They dispose men to forget God, or to leave out of account His providence. Threatening symptoms here and there, the forebodings of thoughtful and close observers, even the half-acknowledged feeling that things cannot go on longer as they are, are not enough to affect greatly the general influence of such a time. But the explosion comes, the volcanic forces find their outlet, the lava streams out to deface and scorch the land. The challenge when this happened, the challenge to patriotism, and the stimulus of responsibility at first engrossed men's thoughts, but the conviction quietly formed that, noble as the opportunities are which the storm gives for individual or national patience, we are confronted by that which is in itself and in its essence an explosion of evil. It changes all the values of credit. We cannot trust what we trusted. We must take stock afresh. From a world of tumult we look upward to God. That upward look is perhaps at first baffled. We are tempted to deny Him and to turn — which of us does not know something of it in his own heart? — to turn to the idols of iron and gold.

But this is not the main effect. "Amidst all that," said a twenty-year-old non-commissioned officer to me, speaking of the hideous *mêlée* of the

charge against a machine gun, "the feeling grows that there must be a Supreme Being and that all this must mean something, and something great, else all is moral chaos." The very nerve of faith is touched. Meaning or no meaning for the world's history and for human life, that, and nothing else, is the issue. God has a meaning through it all.

But, then, secondly, dare we go on to ask what He means? Surely we can judge the past by its effects. There is one strong reason for courage — strong, but indefinite. He compels us to understand again the moral issue. The old struggle of good and evil is revealed. The profound antagonism between them cannot be overlooked or disguised, as in time of peace it is by the network of refined criticism and appreciation of the better and the worse in all things. We see now evil; we can detect its roots, self and selfishness, individual and corporate, the envy of hatred, the trust in visible things, the greed of possession, the contempt of the invisible. So far as we see these things avowed and adopted by our enemies, so far as we can conscientiously say that we ourselves and our Allies stand to-day against these things, so far it is well, and we are at peace with our own conscience. But it is only shallow thought, foolish complacency, that can stop there and not go on to own that we, too, have had and have our part in things which, full-grown in our enemies, we recognise and detest. For all the nations, and not the least our own, we have to ask what is the great antagonistic force which can hold the field against evil, enduring it, resisting it, overcoming it. There is no answer but one. That force

is the Kingdom of God upon earth, the force which He revealed and wielded, the force which has as its sign the sign of strength in weakness, the sign of a long and enduring patience, the sign of the cross, the force which has its spring in love coming out from God, Who is love, to find expression in the life of men. Nothing else will do instead of this, not civilisation nor culture, for evil may turn each and all of these into its agent and its instrument. It is the force of the Kingdom which the Gospel proclaims.

But, then, there is a third consideration which bears specifically upon our particular work. Forced by the war to face and not shirk the fundamental issues, we find, of course, that their scope is world-wide. Far more than the Elizabethans we live, indeed, in spacious times. To think in continents, as we were lately bidden to do, seems, as someone has just said, already a belated thing. We can think no other than world-thoughts. This experience makes us look back over history. It has gone forward by chosen and appropriate instruments — Abraham and the illimitable sea, Moses and the nation which he begets, David and Solomon with the monarchy which grows into an empire and becomes for ever the symbol of an ideal kingdom, Alexander and Augustus broadening life out and binding it into wider unity, so that thinkers have re-dreamed of a city of God in which God and man should be one.

These are parts of God's ways. But there is more to our purpose, another Divine measure even more marked and striking still, sometimes interlacing

with the first, sometimes contrasting with it. It is the method which works by catastrophe. It waits to realise through outward disappointment and failure the more spiritual hopes.

Take the conception of the city of God, of the spiritual Jerusalem. It rises out of the ashes of the town sacked by Nebuchadnezzar and the final destruction by Titus. It shows itself in fuller glory to St. John, the seer of Patmos. It stood there in the world, but not of it. At a time when all unity seemed to be shattered to fragments it was there, a prophecy and a pledge of human unity in some far-off day. And we who have talked so fondly of our Christendom and half identified it in our own thoughts with European civilisation, extended no doubt into the great English-speaking daughter civilisation, now in the presence of Europe's Armageddon, the huge eclipse of its security and self-contentedness, do we not look out upon a world which is quite plainly henceforth a single arena on which problems of universal interest are set to be solved, and issues are joined of gain or loss, of life or death, of progress or ruin, of nothing less than the humanity of which we ourselves have part.

Certain signs of this have been in evidence — the service of our Indian fellow subjects tendered and given for an Empire which, whether or no it is beloved, is seen to respect and to do justice between its many races and religions; the alliance with Japan; the strong attention of the best American opinion to the moral issues and immoral methods of the war; the change from the half-sentimental relations that there were between the Dominions

and ourselves into one conscious and resolute joint service to a cause of lofty principle. These all are signs on the surface of the increasing unity.

But the matter goes much deeper than this. The world is challenged by this awful catastrophe to decide and declare by what principle it means to live, to discover what forces it can rally against all the visible bulks and masses of material power and corporate selfishness. It has become fatally, but gloriously, plain that principles matter, that civilisation cannot morally move by its own impetus or stand by its own stability.

We may, I think, fairly claim that in regard to all this the thought that has been ahead of the time has been that which comes from the mission field. Some such comprehensive survey of the world-possibilities, world-dangers, and world-opportunities as, to take a single name, Dr. Mott gave us in the decade before the war, went some way to anticipate what has now become palpable. But if the Christian Churches failed — as they did fail — to make adequate response to such a claim, their failure was less complete than that of the nations.

But that is all past. It is to the future that we turn with strained eyes and beating hearts. What a wonderful opportunity for the faith of Christ! What a call to advance! What a challenge to enlarge the tents, to strengthen the cords, to lengthen the stakes " for the world-wide past and the world-wide conflict."

Evidently there are two great ministries which the world needs in the name of Christ. They both touch closely the work for which we are come to-

gether in prayer and thought. In both this Society can thankfully and hopefully claim a share, and I shall ask before we end to say a word about both.

The first, the less easy to define, is that of influence — Christian influence — upon the life of the nations, upon that which we call their civilization, upon their historical growth, upon their national and international polity, upon the behaviour of the stronger of them to the weaker, and so forth. We believe with a belief that is stronger than ever now that Christ is the Fountain-Head from which justice draws its strength, and loyalty its self-sacrifice, and patriotism its responsibility and self-restraint, and even war, while war lasts, its chivalry and honour. If I were asked to name instances where those influences were being exerted otherwise than by the contagion of upright character and disinterested service, such as has been rendered by so many of our English public servants in India, could I do better than point to what has been done under the auspices of this Society by Alec Fraser and William Holland, work intensely Christian and yet conscientiously fair to other faiths, work which feeds the springs and nourishes the roots of civilisation and character, work which does our Lord honour by showing His power to elicit and stimulate and purify native life?

At home and on the field alike we must do our part to help the leavening, to recognise and help without jealousy the work of the leaven wherever we see it, to own it as His who redeemed the world which was His own, that the power of His redemption might win the world to be such as He from the first

meant and designed it to be, alike in goodness and truth. He founded His Kingdom on the rock of His own acknowledged Messiahship, and He built, and builds it still, by those who one by one make confession of His name. It was the work of a devoted Christian whose faith and piety you inherit to witness, in times when the truth was almost forgotten amongst our English folk, for that to which war and peace now alike testify — namely, that the Kingdom, the City of God, cannot be less than world-wide, and must gather unto it the desirable things of all nations, must recognise among its citizens no distinction, except of varying kinds of honour and use, between colour and colour and race and sex and kind. It is easy enough, looking back, to see the crudeness of those early efforts. They were like those of children feeling their way and finding their strength. We can see how they lent themselves to the irony of the honest and genial Thackeray, and that there was a certain truth in the charge that they went to blacks abroad and forgot the abject intensity of white needs at their doors. But with childlike simplicity they held to their principles, or rather to their faith. They were out for the salvation of souls. They stood for the equal value of every human soul, not because all are equal, but because each was precious in His eyes, Who clothes with glory every single flower. But in doing this, their own immediate and proper work, they stood implicitly for the inclusion of every race in the City of God. The amazing century which has passed since this has opened out for seeing eyes the magnificent possibilities which this

implied, the enormous range of its meaning, the inevitable necessity of it.

But the confusions and distractions of the war bring anew a stern compulsion to face the truth. If there are indeed world-wide issues of truth and right and freedom, there must be everywhere the witness of Him Who alone is truth, alone is righteousness, alone makes free. Words of a prophetic sort, spoken two years before the war by Dr. Henry van Dyke, are quoted by my noble and missionary-hearted friend, Dr. Arthur Brown, of New York. "It may be," said Dr. van Dyke in 1912, "that disease and humiliation and weakness must befall the Christian forces, and they must be driven to some dreadful battlefield of Armageddon to make them stand together against the united powers of darkness and unbelief." How this must make us long for what is not within any human foresight or possibility, the world-wide witness of a world-wide Church. We cannot accelerate it but by our fervent prayers, in which we know that if we join continually with those that are separated from us on the right hand and on the left, otherwise than by those prayers and by the cultivation of the spirit and temper — thank God, so much more common than it was — which across devotion opens brotherhood, by which we can converge even if the meeting-point be far beyond the horizon. To do more may shatter what we have. But let us, together where we can, apart where we must be apart, keep on doing the work of the Kingdom, keep bearing witness to the King, gathering in what the nations have to bring, keep building the walls of the City with the open gate.

Hold on, then, that very beautiful, thrice-blest work. Keep your missionary anniversary in thankfulness and hope. Go out from it to persevere. You do not need for that such large and ranging thoughts as we have dwelt upon to-night. The lives of the children whom you rescue from the pollutions and cruelties of heathenism into the innocence and happiness of the Christian life, the women whom you build up into the purity of womanhood, the men to whom Christ, through you, teaches manhood His mystery and patience, and who become in their part evangelists and witnesses — these are your reward, and it is rich. These are also your evidence, and it is sufficient, of the necessity for the duty that you do, for "God fulfils Himself in many ways." And I would desire, in a time of confusion, to ask you to descry — indistinctly, I know, but not uncertainly — that even out of the very darkness the light breaks, and out of our narrowing trouble comes some fresh largeness of hope.

THE TASK BEFORE THE CHURCH

DAVID S. CAIRNS, D.D., PROFESSOR OF APOLOGETICS, UNITED COLLEGE, ABERDEEN

WE must not get into the way of thinking and talking as if we had to wait till the end of the war before God would begin His healing and creating work. Were that so, then it would be our wisdom now to think of nothing but the war. But we must continue our prayers and our labours for the evangelisation of the world, just because we believe that God is unremittingly at work even now, alike in His providence and His grace, bringing in His Kingdom.

God is doing it in His providence. It is quite possible to feel the horror of this war so keenly that we become blinded to the great positive historical issues which are realising themselves through it. I believe that great changes were overdue in Europe before the war, and that sooner or later there had to be a settlement of them. One of the fundamental causes of the war was the awakening of the Slavonic races to a new consciousness of their destiny. The Balkan War of independence threw a barrier across the path of Germany to the East; it cut right across the *Drang nach Osten* of the Teutonic peoples, which was itself a great racial and economic movement. It may well be that history may say that the most important thing in the whole war was that it marked

the awakening of the Slav. The awakening of a great race to its true mission and destiny is a stupendous event in human history, and it may be fraught with the greatest good to the world.

Yet another force of which, I believe, history will say that it precipitated the war was the rise of German socialism. Now I quite admit much of the evil that its opponents say of this movement, but it is impossible not to recognise also that it stands for the movement towards popular government in the Germany of to-day, and that it seems to be only the socialists who are able to rise above the narrow national point of view at present prevailing in that country. When it has been purged of its crude and materialistic ways of looking at things, it may be a great force for good in the new age. Unquestionably it was the rise of this new power in Germany which hastened the war, for those who wished and planned the war for military reasons saw that if it were to come it had to come soon, before the popular forces were strong enough to prevent it.

Now these, and many other, questions had to be settled. If men had been wise and righteous, they would have settled them in a reasonable and peaceable way. But it was not to be. We have all had our share in complicating the course of history by our sin, and that sin has led to this tremendous calamity. Yet through it all these great positive and constructive forces are working their way on. Carlyle once said of the American Civil War, "It is the burning of a smoky chimney." Perhaps we may say that about this war also. It is a frightfully

expensive way of cleansing the smoky chimney of Europe. But I believe that in all these things God's overruling providence is at work creating something new. We, too, with all our great failures and sins, have got our providential task within that vast order of the divine purpose to-day. I believe that it is part of our duty set us by God's providence to see this terrible war through. I believe, further, that God, through man's evil, is working out His purpose in history, just as He did in the great Napoleonic wars, which, along with much evil, in the long result brought much good to mankind.

But what we are mainly concerned with here is God's work in grace and the task which that sets before the Church. I make no apology for having referred first to God's work in providence with the task which it sets before us, for you cannot understand God's work in grace without setting it in the great frame of His providence. Surely in this sphere of religious experience we have a great opportunity before us. The war, as everyone who has had to do with religious work knows well, has broken up the hard crust which had gathered on many men's minds. The preacher knows this well. Preaching is a pathetic business to-day. One cannot help noting a new depth and earnestness in men's minds. The presence of death, sorrow, and pain, the sense of being in the grasp of forces far too great for man to control, is awakening the primitive religious sense in man. The feeling of his own helplessness is making him call out for God. A friend of mine, a chaplain at the front, put the matter to me lately in a striking phrase. After a great

deal of experience among our soldiers in the trenches, experience, too, as a censor of their correspondence, he said: "The British soldier has certainly got religion; I am not so sure, however, that he has got Christianity." What he meant, of course, was that there had been an awakening of the great simple truths of religion in the broadest sense. So I have been told by a friend who has worked in the base camps that he never saw any subject to interest the men as did a simple account of prayer. The men were thinking of their wives and families at home, and what would happen to them if they, their guardians, were taken away, and the sense of love and danger and anxiety threw them on God in prayer.

Now all these deep religious forces may go on to a far richer and fuller Christian belief if they are taken in the right way. Or they may develop again into a kind of religion which is dangerous rather than beneficent, for a religion which goes wrong is a very dangerous thing indeed. I can easily conceive of its lapsing now to a fatalistic and exclusive national religion, which I think events are proving to be a real danger to the world. A religion of this kind drives men mad. The real trouble with our religion before the war was that it never seemed capable, when it went wrong, of driving anybody mad. It wanted reality and power. But the old indifference is for the time, among many of our soldiers at the front at least, disappearing. And if we can take this new thoughtfulness and win it for Christ, it may become a vast force of blessing not only in our own country, but in all the warring

lands and throughout the world. If I may vary the figure, the plough has been drawing deep furrows, and now is the time for the sowing of the seed. Perhaps the furrow has not gone deep enough yet, but anyhow there is the soil waiting for the seed.

It is not possible that our people can pass through such a tremendous crisis as the present without being either spiritually richer or poorer. The classical instance of that is Hebrew prophecy. It was the Assyrian terror, an incomparably worse thing, you remember, than any Belgian horror to-day (for the most ruthless Prussian is a very tame person, indeed, compared with the Assyrian), that awakened the soul of Israel. The prophets felt that they needed a God greater than Assyria, and you see the result — the marvellous vision of God which you find burning and shining in the prophecies of Isaiah. In such a time of stress we have either to accommodate our God to the circumstances, or to find a God great enough to dominate the circumstances and us who are in them. I believe that is where we stand to-day. It is only a very thoroughgoing Christianity that will be of the smallest value now — one which practises wholehearted belief in a living God, belief in prayer, above all belief in God in Christ, belief that in Him we have the very centre of reality, that nothing is so real as God in Christ. Christians have to win this faith in a new fashion, and have got to go out and dominate the whole world with that faith.

1. First, I would say that the only Christianity which is really worth thinking about and talking about to-day is a missionary Christianity, one that

is controlled by the ideal of winning the whole world for Christ. I think that some may have felt that too little has been said here about this work during the Conference, but I submit that everything that has been said has always had this missionary aim in view. We have had to rethink all our missionary aims in the light of the war. We have been confronted with an explicit denial of the right of Jesus Christ to control the international life of man. We can only meet this with an intenser conviction that inasmuch as He is divine, He has the right to control all these relations in every part. We have got to assert anew His divine place and right in face of this denial. But the same confession of His divinity carries inevitably with it not only that He has the right to control the whole life of man, but that He has the right to control all men everywhere, heathen as well as Christian. This is the only deep and comprehensive way of looking at Christianity. The day is coming when all the stronger minds of the Church will see this. They will see that it is all or nothing; that a non-missionary Christianity is a contradiction. They will see that unless Christianity pursues a thoroughgoing missionary aim, it cannot prevail, and it cannot be maintained even within Christendom. That is a matter of first principle.

Is it necessary further to point out the disastrous historical consequences which must necessarily follow all disloyalty to the central Christian idea here? The root cause of the war has been the heathen element in Christendom, the trust in physical force as the supreme arbiter between nations, instead of

righteousness and God. That is what we believe we are fighting against. If that denial of the right of Christ to control the life of Christian nations has led to so great a disaster, how much greater will the danger to the world be if nations that have never been Christian, even in name, become armed with all the powers of science, as there is every sign that they soon will be. The outlook is dark indeed unless the whole world be won for Christ and God, unless the Church pursues the missionary ideal with a new faith and a greater result.

2. Thus the only Christianity that can prevail in the coming age is one that, learning from the present tragedy, declares that Christ shall have dominion over our whole international life. We have got to point out that this disaster has come about through His sway being ignored, and to insist that this shall never happen again. We have to strive and to pray that the Spirit of Jesus shall be brought to bear in a new way in all the relations of the nations of the world, that each has its part in the common task of bringing in His Kingdom, and that each can only come to its true individuality in the common life of humanity.

We all know that the Napoleonic wars meant the awakening of the spirit of nationality throughout the whole world. So I trust that the result of this greater war will be not only, as men say, to complete that movement of the liberation of nationalities, but to bring up upon the horizon of men the idea that the nations, having won their individual national life, have now to use that individuality by co-operating on behalf of humanity for the great

common end of the Kingdom of God. We shall never get things right until we get them on that basis. It may seem Utopian, but, as a well-known man of letters has said, the issue before the world to-day is Utopia or Hell, and, as the Prime Minister said in a recent speech, "Many things which seemed Utopian a year ago are no longer Utopian to-day." When such men are saying such things, it does not become us who believe in God to be backward with the Christian Utopia.

We cannot see the world-situation to-night, or indeed at any time, unless we dream a little about the future. I am willing to dream that we are going to have not only a concert of Europe, but a concert of the world for a great common end. It may not be to-morrow or next year, but it is involved in the Christian thought of God, and in Christ's teaching of the Kingdom of God; and if the Church is faithful, then it will surely come after the disaster and sorrow and pain, as the dawn and the calm come after the night and the tempest. God has taught us that He loves that we should think great things about Him, and so it behoves us to be greater in our hopes and in our faith. Of this I am convinced, that only He can mediate between man and man, and nation and nation, who has already mediated between man and God. That great dream of a united world can never be realised without Jesus Christ. Other foundation can no man lay.

3. Then we have to seek to make Him King throughout all the sphere of social life. How intricate and difficult an affair that is we have been

reminded already. What, when all is said, is a really Christian social policy? It is one which recognises the supreme value of the soul, the sacredness of human personality. If Jesus Christ taught any lesson to humanity, it was this of the value of the soul, and out of that valuation of the soul has come all that is noblest in our modern world in its valuation of liberty and personality. Christ has put His consecrating hand upon man. Let no man despise any man for whom Christ died. Lord Acton has told us that modern political liberty came out of the Reformation by way of the French Revolution. The Reformation came out of St. Paul, and St. Paul came out of Christ. But even yet the work of realising the sacredness of human personality is only beginning.

I remember reading how during the South African War a Boer marksman shot a Connaught Ranger on the banks of the Tugela River. The Boer set about stripping the soldier of his clothes. He took off the great-coat and loosened the tunic, and then saw lying on the breast of the dead soldier a crucifix. He stood still looking down at it. A great human gulf opened between that Puritan soldier fighting for his country and the Irish papist, but something for the moment bridged that gulf. The Boer stood looking at the crucifix. Then he took the coat and covered the poor body up again, and walked away. He could do no indignity to the brother for whom Christ died.

Now, it is not for the Church, I think, to enter into any detailed scheme of social legislation. Its business is to keep that sense of what the Cross

means, in revealing the sacredness of human personality, constantly before our legislators. We can never solve any social problem unless we take account of Christ. It is for our legislators to translate that into legislation, and for our administrators to translate it into practice. We have got to preach and witness these things not with our words only, but with our lives.

4. But we have to think not only of human society and of how we can win it for Christ. We have got to think of how the Church itself may be strengthened for the work of winning society. There is no more crucial question before the Church than how we are to win the youth of the rising generation for Christ. I think that many of us, for some time back, have been looking with some misgiving upon our youth. We feared that the breed was becoming soft. I know that many ministers and clergymen have marked with concern that large number of our youth upon whom the hold of the Church was merely nominal. Sometimes these men were outside it, and sometimes nominally within it. They sat there in the churches just because their fathers sat there, and not because they loved it as their fathers did. Now the trouble was that though these men sat there, their children would not sit there. Many of us feared that the root of the matter was that the love of pleasure had left no room in their hearts for the love of duty and of God.

Have we not all had a lesson during the past twelve months which we are never likely to forget? We have all got the lesson that there has been a

possibility of sacrifice in the youth of our country that many of us never dreamed of. I do not think that the most generous observer dreamed that the call of those trenches — which every soldier who has been there says are simply hell — would have been so magnificently answered. Even those who think it is all a terrible mistake, that all soldiering is wrong, must surely realise that there is real sacrifice here, and those of us who have been in contact with the mind of youth during these momentous months have good reason to know that the cynical explanation is not in the main the true one.

Now what I cannot help feeling is, why should the Church not be able to awaken that kind of sacrifice? We have summoned them to come to the service of King and Country because King and Country need them. Can we not make the same plea for the King of Kings and the Country of Countries? What are we going to do with our sons, our young men, when they come home again? There is hardly anything that we can apply our minds to at present of greater moment than that. My conviction is that it is not all their fault that the Church has hitherto not won them to her service. Let us appeal to the noblest in them, to the need for *service*, and I believe that we shall get an answer.

But where are we to get the force for all this vast fourfold mission of the Christian Church in this tremendous crisis? How are we to turn the crisis into an opportunity, the opportunity into a spiritual victory? We all know that we can only get it through the risen Lord. This is the heart of the whole matter. We are all called to a new disciple-

ship, a following of Jesus Christ in a more intimate way than before.

> "Apart from Thee all gain is loss,
> All labour vainly done;
> The solemn shadow of Thy cross
> Is better than the sun."

The new world that will come after the war must arise out of the fellowship of Christian men with the risen Lord. He must have the creating of it, and He can only create it through the mediation of dedicated lives. The power of the new life is a matter of fellowship and of following. It must needs come by a kind of contagion, and pass from Christians to others, also by contagion. Those who set themselves consciously to influence others too often lose themselves in mere futility. It hurts one's real influence to think too much about it. The new life comes like a contagion when it comes at all. And so the faith and hope and love which the world needs can only come out of us as a kindling power if we are living the life of fellowship with the risen Jesus.

So it is also with the question of guidance in perplexity. Which of us is not perplexed when he thinks of the future? Which of us can wholly see his road through the chaos in front of him? We have been talking a good deal of what will come after the war, but the wisest of us will surely be the most humble. We are as yet far too near the war fully to understand it, still less to understand what will come after it. We shall have to feel our way for a long time yet through a kind of chaos. But none the less the man or the woman who will simply

keep near to the risen Christ cannot possibly go astray. It is God's plan that we have to build upon, and not our own, and God's plan is greater than ours, and if we get into it we can trust it. Cromwell once said: "A man never rises so high as when he does not know where he is going." He meant that if you will give yourself over to the following of truth and duty and love, you have not the least idea whither they will take you in the world of space and time. You do not know where you are going. You only know that you are going home. So we must leave the further course of the world and of our own lives to Christ. Our whole business is to try to keep near Him, and to come nearer Him from day to day.

A year or two ago I remember talking with a friend who told me that he was going to see Niagara. I told him that he must on no account miss seeing "the Cave of the Winds." I described to him what you experience as you pass right through that wild chaos of waters. I said, "It is like living amidst the break-up of an old universe or the creation of a new. You are shut off from the whole world of nature and humanity for the time, enwrapt in this wild smother of thunder and foam. Your only link with the entire world of humanity is the pressure of the hand of your guide. You cannot see him, you cannot hear him; all that you are conscious of is a hand with a pull in it." My friend looked at me and said: "How like that is to human life!" We are amid a wild confusion and uproar, and hardly know whether it is an old world that is going to pieces, or a new world that is coming into being.

Our one link with the greater world beyond it is a Hand with a pull in it, that draws us on. We may be the most perplexed and confused of men, but if we follow that piercèd Hand that draws us on, it will lead each of us into the very heart of God's plan for us and for the world, to the thought He wishes us to think and the work He wishes us to do.

He is not only the source of guidance and power, the Way and the Life, He is also the Truth, the test of our progesss in the Spiritual Kingdom. Is He becoming more to us, or less? That is the sovereign test of growth. Dante says in the "Paradiso" that he knew that he was rising in the heavens, because he saw the face of Beatrice becoming more and more beautiful to him. We may know that we are on the right road through the immense chaos around us, if the Lord means more and more to us as we feel our way onward day by day. He is drawing us all on into a new discipleship, and to labour and experiences that will draw us nearer to our fellow men, nearer to Him, and nearer to God. What shall we answer to this persistent drawing of the piercèd Hand?

"Jesus, Thou joy of loving hearts,
Thou Fount of life, Thou Light of men,
From the best bliss that earth imparts
We turn unfilled to Thee again!"

THE THEOLOGICAL OUTLOOK IN TIME OF WAR

By A. E. Garvie, M.A., D.D., Principal of New College, Hampstead

1. If Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, yea, and for ever, if the faith was once for all delivered to the saints, we may well ask the question, Why should the theological outlook be affected by the war, or even any event in human history?

(i.) In *the first place* there are a good many persons, who have hitherto been quite indifferent to the realities with which theology is concerned, who have by their present experience been forced to ask themselves questions which they never thought worth asking before. We may gratefully admit that there is a wider and a deeper interest in the ultimate problems of the world and life than there was before.

(ii.) In the second place it must, I think, be admitted that within the Christian Churches even there was not the appreciation of theology that it deserves; and not a few preachers have gained and held popularity in an inverse ratio to the real and permanent value of their contribution to Christian thought, while the few Christian thinkers we have have laboured under the depressing consciousness that their labours were not appreciated because

the necessity for them was not generally recognised. There was a superficial, optimistic, amiable creed, which passed as the Gospel, but which sounded no such depths as the cross of Christ, and scaled no such heights as His Crown of Saviourhood and Lordship. This fashion of the hour in religious thinking has lost its charm and its worth.

(iii.) Informed and responsible theologians have not found it necessary to revise the articles of their faith, as the war has not disclosed facts about God or man, sin or salvation, life or death, duty or destiny, which had hitherto escaped their scrutiny. If the Gospel of Christ has been adequate to answer the questions and meet the needs of all the Christian generations, which have passed through not less tragic and mysterious experiences than the present calamity which so oppresses us, we need not fear that it will fail us or come short. Our experience to-day is making us test the sufficiency of some of the current interpretations of the Gospel, but it is not disproving the permanent and universal content of the Christian faith. It is offering us striking illustrations of some Christian truths: it is laying a strong emphasis on articles of the creed held by the Church of Christ which had fallen into some neglect; it is throwing weights into the scale of our knowledge, which are inclining the balance of our judgment to the one side rather than the other on some disputed questions.

As the storm and stress of life is more severe, the need of the comfort and help religion can offer is more keenly felt, and so the questions which theology in interpreting the Christian Gospel seeks to answer

are being more eagerly asked. If they are not answered adequately, there may be a relapse from faith; if they are answered so as to satisfy, faith will be confirmed. The outlook shows peril as well as promise.

2. In such a position no attempt at a systematic statement covering the whole field of theological inquiry can be, or should be, attempted. The problems of the hour must be alone dealt with, so that their Christian solution may be offered. I confine myself accordingly to four questions, all of which I have found mentioned in the daily press, and yet when they are placed side by side it will be seen how much of the field of Christian thought they cover.

(i.) In the *Westminster Gazette* there was for some time a correspondence on the subject of Divine providence. Can we, confronted by so great an evil as this war, still hold the article of the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in God the Father Almighty"? Must we not surrender either the Fatherhood or the Almightiness?

(ii.) A deservedly popular preacher soon after the war broke out preached a sermon in which he used its outrages and horrors as an argument for the old doctrine of original sin and total depravity. Must we, in spite of all anthropology and psychology have to tell us, fall back on such a belief?

(iii.) In opposition to pacificism many Christians are assuming an attitude towards the war which allows the non-Christian to say that the Sermon on the Mount is superseded, the Christian ideal is being proved impracticable. Is it indeed true, as

was said bitterly in the House of Commons, that there is nothing doing in Christianity?

(iv.) Many shadowed homes and wounded hearts in our midst are raising the question: Is it well with those who have fallen?

1. The way in which many Christians speak about God's providence entirely justifies the taunt of unbelief that God must be either not loving or not almighty, since He allows this war.

(i.) They talk about the Divine omnipotence as though God could and might do anything that we can conceive or desire; they do not recognise that there are certain metaphysical impossibilities in the very nature of reality, as that a thing cannot both be and not be, that there are certain moral impossibilities for God. He can and does act only in accordance with the perfection of His own nature; that He has voluntarily in creating man as a free personality subjected Himself in grace for man to certain limitations, to the treatment of sin either in punitive justice or in redemptive grace, and never by physical omnipotence.

(ii.) The pious talk one sometimes hears, that God has sent this war upon us for our sins, or that He could stop this war at any moment, or that He is allowing it to go on until we have learnt the lesson it is meant to teach us, cannot be justified theologically. We may speak of the war as God's judgment on sin in the sense that it is the inevitable consequence of the sins of the nations in their relations with one another; but we must not speak of it as though it were an arbitrary punishment inflicted by God. We may say that it will go on until the na-

tions have learned the lesson, not in the sense that God by His direct action will prolong it, as a schoolmaster might who was keeping his boys in as a punishment for some youthful escapade, but in the sense that it will go on until the nations are brought into the moral condition in which they will desire peace rather than a continuance of war. Declarations that the war has come upon us because of our intemperance, or impurity, or Sabbath-breaking show a pious sentiment which has parted company with all theological sense.

(iii.) There is a moral order in human history which does express and enforce God's judgment on human sin, and the present war is an instance of that Divine judgment through that moral order; and it is wise and right for us to ask ourselves what are the moral conditions in the nations of Europe, the consequences of which are being written in blood and tears, wounds and death, flame and famine. As Christians we can and do believe that God, in His revealing truth and redeeming grace, is not "cribb'd, cabin'd, confin'd" by the natural or moral order as we know it in our common experience; but that He is a God who doeth wonders in making Himself known to men and saving them. But this conviction does not justify the too common attitude of many pious persons, as though there were no natural order and no moral order in accordance with which God generally works, and in accordance with which we are bound, unless there is compelling evidence to the contrary, to interpret His dealings with men in nature or in grace.

2. It may be confidently asserted that no theodicy,

no justifying of the ways of God to man, is possible from the standpoint of this crude thinking, which often gives itself the air of superior piety.

(i.) We can relieve the pressure of the problem of physical evil only as we recognise that what is not due to human action is the result — it would appear the inevitable result — of a natural order, which is not only on the whole, but even for the most part, beneficent and which, even in its seeming severity and cruelty, serves to develop man intellectually, industrially, socially, and even morally and religiously. Similarly the problem of moral evil, of which the war is so striking and bewildering an instance, can find even an approach to a solution only as we recognize that God is creating man as free personality with the possibility of sin, and in preserving man even when sin became actuality has accepted limitations on His power by His wisdom, and His grace in a moral order.

(ii.) God is, as Creator and Preserver, responsible for the creation of free personalities, for whom sin was a possibility, and for their continuance when sin became an actuality. That we must admit and maintain; and we can justify God's ways to man only as we can show that thus and thus only could He attain the Supreme Good of a humanity freely willing dependence on, communion with, submission and resemblance to Himself; and that He has resources of truth and grace in Himself of which the promise and pledge are given in Christ, to secure that supreme good. Each of these points claims fuller treatment.

(*a*) Such moral personality in man as can enter

into personal relation to God must be free, and freedom means the possibility of the choice either of the wrong or the right, the bad or the good. Without this possibility we cannot conceive persons, but only machines and puppets of Divine omnipotence. Had God, foreseeing this possibility, abstained from creating, evil would have defeated Him by His fear of it and helplessness to deal with it, before it even came to be.

(*b*) God's continuance of sinful mankind is itself an indication that He knows that in the end He will gain the mastery over sin, and secure the supreme good of the community of free personalities, perfected in holiness and blessedness. His moral order attaches such consequences to sin, not arbitrarily, but inevitably, that sin works its own destruction, and such results of good that good works its own progress. This order of punitive justice is preparatory for, confirmed in, and then superseded by the order of redemptive grace. In Christ's Cross law yields to grace because fulfilled in grace, and judgment on is taken up into the forgiveness of sin. In the spirit of Christ men are being redeemed out of their bondage to sin into the liberty of the Son of God. What has been accomplished, what is being achieved by God's redemptive grace in human history justifies the confident expectation that God shall yet be all in all; and thus the end will vindicate the beginning and the course of God's purpose.

(iii.) While God is thus responsible, and thus meets his responsibility for the creation and continuance of free persons, He is not responsible for their free acts or the consequences which inevitably

result from them. It may be said that these consequences are His judgment, but we could blame God for the nature and extent of these consequences only if they could be regarded as arbitrarily imposed instead of being, as we have every reason to assert, inevitable results. What does increase the problem is undoubtedly the fact that not only do the innocent suffer with the guilty, but that even the innocent often suffer more than the guilty. But here again we must recognise that the solidarity of the race, due to what we may call physical and social heredity (*i.e.*, inheritance from ancestors and the influence of the social environment), while it involves so much evil, yet even as the natural order, is on the whole and for the most part, beneficial. Man's progress is proof that heredity, physical and social, works mainly, if not solely, for good. It is not pretended that a full logical demonstration has been offered of the thesis that we may still believe in God's almighty Fatherhood in the sense that God can and will do all that His Fatherhood desires and permits; but these considerations should suffice to relieve the pressure of the problem enough for our thought to allow the reasonableness of the faith which the truth and grace of Christ evokes and sustains.

3. The theodicy which has just been sketched asserts and cannot but assert that in the natural and moral order there is revealed the reality of God's punitive justice, and this punitive justice must be regarded not only as necessary for man to deter from and prevent sin, but as also necessary to God as expressing the essential and eternal an-

tagonism of His perfection to sin. The shallow theology of a Fatherhood which is merely good nature is thoroughly discredited, and we are compelled to admit that God's holy love hates, judges and punishes sin — it would seem even with terrible severity, penalty for our moral softness appearing even to outrun offence. But if we recognize the reality of God's punitive justice, we are surely led to the objective view of the Atonement, of which the faith of many Christians has lost all hold, and which even for not a few Christian thinkers has appeared an intolerable offense. Unless we introduce an intolerable inconsistency in God's self-revelation, redemptive grace is not a contradiction of punitive justice; it is a higher stage of God's self-revelation, but one in which punitive justice is not made of none effect, but rather is fulfilled, carried up to its final issue, God in Christ Himself sharing the consequences of the natural and moral order, in which punitive justice is a reality Although the doctrine of the Atonement has not yet emerged in public discussion in connection with the war, we may believe that it will again soon come into proper prominence.

II

1. Any attempt to exploit the evil of the war in the interests of theological reaction is to be condemned; and any panic theology which in the warmth of its heart loses the coolness of its head is to be deprecated. That this war has discredited the shallow and empty idealism and optimism of

some Christian preachers, who were proclaiming the sufficiency of human progress, and ignoring the necessity of the Divine redemption, may be fully conceded. The advice of a prominent man of science that Christian preachers should not talk so much about sin, as the modern man did not worry about his sins, and was right in not worrying, has been proved the folly which all serious Christian thinkers knew at the time it was. The Cross of Jesus Christ has given to mankind an apocalypse of sin in the Divine judgment as well as a revelation of love in the Divine forgiveness of sin, to which even the losses and cruelties, and miseries of this war can add nothing, although it may arrest the attention and rebuke the indifference of those, even bearing the Christian name, who have wandered away from "the solemn shadow of that Cross." The reality of sin, and the evil that it is ever inflicting on mankind, are assuredly being "writ large" on the record of history. But we must be careful how we explain the fact. We must be careful in determining whether the responsibility rests on *nature* or *nurture*, *physical* or *social heredity*.

2. Before dealing with the particular application we may discuss the general principle: Is sin due to heredity or environment? or, if we must recognise both factors, which is the more potent? The dispute between Spencer and Weissman as to whether acquired characters are or are not transmissible has less bearing on the question than is often assumed as sin can hardly be treated as only an acquired character; the passions and appetites from which it springs must be regarded as belonging to the

nature transmitted, and the possibility of the intensification of these variations in the nature by inheritance must surely be recognised. There are passions and appetites surviving in man, due to his ancestry, which, if not sinful in themselves, become the raw material of sin when not controlled and, if need be, repressed by the strength of the will under the guidance of conscience.

That the moral development of each individual is unaffected by his physical heredity is an assertion which goes beyond the evidence, although, as the influence of the environment begins even before birth, it is impossible to affirm how far the moral resemblance of parents and children is due to inheritance rather than to influence. Certain it is that social heredity has had a far greater potence in the transmission and diffusion of sin in the race than Christian theology has generally recognised; and that to physical heredity more effect has been assigned by Christian theology hitherto than the evidence justifies. In the society into which each individual is born, and within which he grows, there pass from generation to generation social standards, customs, institutions, which are potent either for good or ill.

3. The war has not revealed defects of human nature of which we were not aware before; it has not exposed appetites or passions hitherto unsuspected or unknown. More misery, suffering, loss, and ruin have been inflicted because larger numbers have been engaged, and because greater material resources for destruction have been at the command of the belligerents than in any previous war. But

the cruelties and lusts this war has shown in so lurid a light have been often paralleled in the tragic and shameful annals of man's inhumanity to man. Why, then, to so many startled and pained observers does humanity appear to-day as worse than it could have been conceived to be? In three considerations we shall find the answer.

(i.) The horror, indignation, and condemnation of German frightfulness expressed not only by the sufferers from it, but even by neutral nations, are an evidence of moral progress; while humanity has not advanced far enough to make war impossible, it does shrink from the appetites and passions which are let loose by war. Evils which but a century ago would have seemed inevitable accompaniments of war are now regarded as intolerable aggravations of it. The impression made on the world by this moral evil is an evidence of a growing moral good.

(ii.) What distinguishes the civilised man from the savage is that he does not give a loose rein to cruelty and lust, but restrains and represses them. When the civilised man does reverse this process of moral progress, his vice and violence are evidence of a moral relapse, a return to a lower stage of moral evolution. What with good reason has frightened many in connection with this war is the discovery how easily and quickly the civilised man can fall back to the savage. It may make us miserable to discover, that in spite of all our moral progress, such a moral relapse is still possible.

(iii.) This alarm is intensified by the discovery that the relapse is not due to instability of human nature, but to falsity and perversity of human

theory. The frightfulness is being justified as a necessity of war, and war itself is being justified as good both as an end in itself, and as a means to the preservation, advancement, and dominance of a national *kultur*. It is not physical heredity, but social heredity, which is responsible for the German theory of the supremacy of the State, and the frightfulness which is its application. It may be that the Prussian shows a natural brutality, and that Germany has been brutalised, but a historical explanation could be found for the one as for the other fact. We cannot assume that German babes are born more brutal than babes of other nations. So far as this war then throws any light on the question of the relative importance of physical or of moral heredity, there seems to me very little doubt that it makes us see as we never saw before, that nurture in the widest sense has had far more to do with producing this evil than nature. A patriotism which subordinates humanity, a State which subjugates a Church, a reason and conscience which let loose and do not hold in check passions and appetites, here lies the present moral tragedy.

III

Is this moral tragedy irretrievable? Must we acquiesce in an arrest of moral progress, and give up the Christian ideal as impracticable?

1. The analysis of the moral condition of Germany, which must be held as mainly responsible for the war, although we cannot acquit the other belligerents of some contributory faults, suggests that

the situation is not so hopeless. It is not an incurable disease of nature with which we are dealing; but with a false ideal, opposing itself to the true, and a false ideal which, as it has been developed under historical conditions, may also under historical influences be disproved and dethroned.

(i.) We are not warranted in assuming in Germany some mysterious ineradicable taint in the blood, which cannot be erased, and which in the future will force all the other nations in self-defence to maintain armies and fleets prepared for another outbreak of German outrage and violence. We are justified in hoping that the results of the war will be educative for the German people, that they will learn in the school of adversity not only the falsity but the fatality of the ideal of national domination which they have been hitherto cherishing, and that with a chastened and even contrite heart they will be willing to base their relations to the other peoples of Europe, not on fear, fraud, and force, but on respect, tolerance, and co-operation in the common tasks of a Christian civilisation. To doubt or deny this possibility shows a moral scepticism unwarranted by history. For who can forget that the France which is now our trusted and honoured ally was in 1815 as great a threat and peril to Europe as Germany in 1915. There is at times a temporary moral decadence in nations; but that need not end in permanent degradation. There may be self-discovery and self-recovery; and it is too soon at least to assert that Germany cannot and will not change.

(ii.) We must accordingly protest with heart and

mind against those who argue that it is Utopian to think of, and work for, the regulation of international relations by Christian principles. If the efforts that were being made in Europe to secure the conditions of permanent peace were unsuccessful, that is not a proof that they were vain; and that it would have been better for ourselves and the other nations if we had surrendered the Christian ideal as visionary, and had paid Germany the sincerest form of flattery in the imitation of its militarism; still less is that a reason why after the war is over these efforts should not be renewed with even greater courage and vigour. A defeated Germany will surely mean for all who have any insight and foresight a discredited militarism; the removal of the menace of a Germany increasing its army and navy from Europe will surely offer an opportunity such as was never possessed before of an all-round reduction of the armaments, which have proved not preventive, but provocative of war; the growing unity of Europe apart from the Central Power, surely will offer a starting point for a federation of the world in the interests of peace.

2. There seems no urgent reason in the present situation for the assumption that the Christian ideal will after the war seem less practicable than it seemed to many before the calamity. It may, however, be objected that if the Christian ideal is practicable it should have prevented the war. Several considerations can be offered in answer.

(i.) In the Christian ideal morality and religion are fused into an indissoluble unity; what man

can and ought to do depends on what God has done and is doing. Christian goodness is the obedience of faith in the grace of God. The teaching of Jesus was not for the world, but for the community of His disciples. The Sermon on the Mount is visionary for the unsaved man; and only the constraining love and the transforming life of Christ can enable any Christian to find his freedom in fulfilling the commandments of Christ. The Christian Church has erred in expecting the doing of Christian duty apart from the enabling of Christian faith. Christ's Lordship can be realised only when His Saviourhood is experienced. While it is the duty of the Christian Church to be a preserving salt and a transforming leaven in human society, to exercise an enlightening, cleansing, and ennobling influence in the world, it can expect the Christian ideal to be realised in the world full only as the world is brought wholly within the Church, or body of Christ.

(ii.) We must not be deceived by appearances; Christendom is only nominally, not vitally and vigorously, Christian. Europe is not yet Christian. It was a secularised Christianity which, after the fall of the Roman Empire, carried out the conversion to Christianity of the new nations. This conversion was superficial in the extreme, as the moral and religious conditions of the Middle Ages show. Even the Reformation did not secure the realisation of the Christian ideal morally, socially, politically. The existence of national churches and the subordination in these of Church to State, religion to nationality, has given the appearance only, and never gained the reality, of a Christian nation.

The failure of Christendom cannot be regarded as the failure of Christianity, for much as Christian faith has achieved in individual believers, the Christian religion and morality have never really been tested in the national, still less the universal, scale.

(iii.) Admitting the failure of Christendom to be Christian, and the fault of the Church in not having Christianised the world more thoroughly, admitting, that is, that the Christian ideal might have been realised in human society to a far greater extent than it has been, we must at the same time recognise that morality and religion are affected and cannot but be affected by the totality of the historical conditions, and that these have not been favourable to a very much more rapid Christian progress. We may not be able to give the reason, but we must admit the fact that a gradual evolution seems to be the Divine method alike in the creation of the world and the re-creation of man.

3. The Christian ideal is authoritative for the Christian, the world is not yet Christian, and so the ideal has not been and cannot yet be realised in the world; but the Christian is in the world, while not of it. Can he individually realise, or even attempt to realise, the ideal in the world?

(i.) We must recognise that morality is conditioned and cannot but be conditioned by the society within which it is practised. The Christian must be less entirely Christian in a world that is not Christian; he shares the burden of the world's sin in the limitation of the possibility of his realising his ideal. While he strives to the

uttermost of his capacity and opportunity to keep the commands of Christ, he discovers that the keeping of some of them is impracticable, not because he is unwilling to pay the price of obedience, but because, the world being what it is, his obedience would fail of its intended effect. As a citizen especially, who cannot stand aloof from the life of his nation, he finds himself involved in obligations and responsibilities which he cannot disown or evade, and which limit his realisation of the Christian ideal. As Christ, who came to redeem them that are under the law, was Himself under the law, so the Christian has to make the best he can of moral conditions which are not ideally the best.

(ii.) What is involved, however, is not a compromise with evil, but rather a condescension to imperfection, a self-emptying and self-humbling for the hardness of men's hearts, in order not to offend, if by any means to win some. While the Christian himself is not under the law, but under grace, he lives in a world which is still under law, because it has not yet come under grace. The order of law is not sinful, although as penal justice it is conditioned by the existence of sin, but it is morally imperfect and provisional in comparison with the order of grace. As the Christian is in the world it may be necessary for him to act according to the order of law when it is as yet impracticable for him to act according to the order of grace. Here is to be found the answer to the question, which has been so acute a distress to many serious and earnest Christians: May a Christian fight? He may desire and purpose to act towards others only as God has

acted towards him in redemptive grace. But if others will not be treated in this way, if they abuse redemptive grace for moral anarchy, must the Christian not only risk all his own interests, but even the interests of his dear ones and of the society to which he owes so much? As an imitator of God, he may, when redemptive grace is refused and rejected, act as God Himself acts, in punitive justice. In God's government of the world redemptive grace has not as its only alternative moral anarchy; all who will not come under grace fall under law. It is the Christian's delight to be the minister of God's redemptive grace; it may be his duty to offer himself to God as an instrument of His punitive justice. Assuredly egoistic interests, as even patriotic sentiments, do not warrant his assuming any such function; it must be laid upon him as the claim and call of God's Kingdom, the sovereignty of His truth and grace in the world.

4. It is probable that men and women are thinking more to-day about future destiny than they ever did before. If they have loved ones, who have fallen, they are asking: Is it well with them?

(i.) Now, as regards those who have confessed the Christian faith, and commended it by the Christian life, there can be no fear, doubt, or question. Absent from the body, these are present with the Lord. As to them to live was Christ, so to die was gain.

(ii.) But as regards those who made no Christian profession in word or deed, what has the Christian Church to say to any who mourn their loss? Not only does Christian sympathy forbid, but the

Christian Gospel does not warrant the assertion, that they have perished. The problem is too complex for the simple solution that at death saints go to heaven and sinners to hell.

(iii.) There is, however, no warrant in Scripture or in the facts of life, for the assertion that those who died with no inward change whatever were at once saved because they had laid down their life as a sacrifice. The Christian Gospel is that we are saved by Christ's sacrifice, not that we are saved by self-sacrifice.

(iv.) There is moral continuity between the present and the future life; and if they died in the spirit of self-sacrifice this will be so much moral gain for their moral growth hereafter. That where the soul has not finally rejected the grace of God moral probation will be continued I think we are warranted by Scripture and the facts of life to assume, and that probation will include the opportunity of receiving the grace of God which alone saves. We may trust, hope, pray that the future life begun in self-sacrifice will reach the salvation in Christ's sacrifice.

(v.) The salvation of the penitent companion of Christ on the Cross offers us further consolation. On the one hand we may be sure that Christ is near those who are dying in a spirit akin to His in offering Himself, and ready to save if there be even the slightest movement of penitence and faith towards Him. On the other hand, in the hour of death much can be remembered, much experienced, much resolved; indifference can be changed to interest, and penitence and faith can spring up and grow

quickly in the soil of interest. In human experience and character there is not only slow evolution, but swift revolution; there are moments of so intensified aspiration and endeavour that in them more can be won than years before had brought. On the field of battle, in the valley of the shadow, there may be a new creation, the old things passed away, all things become new, because human penitence and faith have received Divine grace unto salvation.

(vi.) Finally, must we not commit ourselves and persuade the mourning to commit themselves to the Love that never fails, that cannot err, that will be more pitiful and tender, more eager and ready to save and bless than our love ever can conceive or desire? The Christian Gospel of the Crucified and Risen Lord, and the Fatherhood revealed therein, is alone our help and our hope in the hours of darkness, dread, and desolation. Who shall separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord?

"THOU SHALT NOT KILL" AND THE WAR

By Robert F. Horton, M.A., D.D.

"Thou shalt not kill" is the Sixth Commandment in the Decalogue. First of all it has to be observed that the Hebrew word used in that commandment is not the common word for "kill"; it is the word for killing of a certain kind, and therefore the Revised Version has endeavoured to correct the mistake by translating the commandment, "Thou shalt do no murder"; for the prohibition in that commandment does not include every kind of killing, but only killing of that kind which we call murder. The distinction between killing and murder is quite familiar to our minds, and it is familiar to every maker of laws. For example, when in this law book of the Old Testament it says, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed," the person who carried out that sentence of execution would not be charged with violating the Sixth Commandment of the Decalogue. Furthermore, all through the Old Testament we find that certain sins, especially the sin of blasphemy and the sin of adultery, were visited with immediate death; but the person who carried out that sentence of the law would not be charged with breaking the Sixth Commandment, "Thou shalt not murder."

We realise the distinction instinctively. If, for example, a father defended his children or a husband

his wife from a ruffian who was assailing their lives or their honour, and in doing so he killed the ruffian, it would not be called murder, nor would it in fact be murder. Or if to-night there enters your house after dark a burglar and you kill him in order to save your life or the lives of others, you are not charged with murder, but only with manslaughter, which is quite different. Thus the Sixth Commandment does not forbid killing as such; it does not forbid the killing of a criminal who has incurred the supreme sentence of the law, nor does it forbid the killing of those who have outraged all the laws of God and man, so that they are no longer tolerable to the earth on which they live. What it does forbid is murder — "Thou shalt commit no murder."

It is not a pleasant subject, but let us be quite clear. What do we mean by "murder"? It is to kill from a personal motive influenced by some personal passion. The principal causes of murder are either an outbreak of sudden anger, in which a man loses control of himself, or the influence of drink, or the still more deadly influence of jealousy. When from a personal motive, and actuated by a personal passion, a man kills another, that is murder. All such killing — killing that is not in the interests of the community at all, nor according to the will of God at all, but simply to gratify the egoistic or selfish passion of an individual — is forbidden. "Thou shalt do no murder" stands as an eternal law of society.

When a soldier kills an enemy in battle he is not actuated by any personal feeling at all; he has no personal enmity; he is simply carrying out a com-

mand that is laid upon him by the State to which he belongs, and he is not responsible for that command in the least as a soldier, but simply as a citizen. In the case of our soldiers, speaking generally, the citizenship has not yet come in; they are mostly boys who have no rights of citizenship as yet. The soldiers as a body are not even voters; they have not even the remote responsibility for the war that lies in electing the Government that went to war. But, while we entirely exonerate the soldier from murder when he kills, you of course recognise that if that soldier kills a comrade or kills any one else he is immediately proceeded against as a murderer, and if he is found guilty he is condemned to death. Therefore, when we begin to think clearly about it, there can be no doubt at all about the distinction between killing and murder. The clear distinction has been made even clearer by the events of this war, because the peculiar gravamen of the charge that we bring against the German Government is that it has obliterated the distinction between murder and the killing that is recognised as lawful killing in war. The German Government has made murder a part of its method of war, and it is for that obliteration of the fine but real distinction that humanity rises up against the German people and the German Government.

Now from that elementary point I want to pass on to another which is much more difficult to grasp, but yet ought to be made clear. Very few of us thought out before the war began what is implied in being a citizen or a member of a great community. We were born into the community; we took it for

granted, and we never really asked ourselves, What does it mean to be a citizen of this country? When however, we begin to ask ourselves the question, we soon get to this point: we are bound in being citizens of a great community to make the surrender of certain elements of our personal freedom in order to secure the larger freedom that a great national society gives us. It is not possible to be a member of a great State and to preserve absolute individualism. We make the surrender to secure a greater good. As members of a great community we are not able to employ our own tests or even assert our own opinions without limits against the demands of the community to which we belong; or, if we do assert our private opinions or our personal tests against the demands of our community, we have to forfeit the privileges of the community which has made those demands which we refuse.

When a great country, for example, has to defend herself against the invasion of a foe, or when a great country has to vindicate her honour — which may be much more precious to a country, as to a man, than life itself — the individual citizen cannot stand aside and say that that is no concern of his. We are all bound as citizens of a great State to take our part in the defence of our country and the vindication of her honour, and the only exception I know to that principle is this: that supposing the country demands of us what we believe to be contrary to the law of God; if, for example, the country passed a law that we should all habitually commit adultery, or if the country passed a law that we

should all renounce Christ, and turn our backs upon religion and morality, we should be bound to resist, and we should resist. We should all say at once, "It is much better to die than to yield this point, for of what value is even our national life if our morality and our religion are gone?"

Just so far as men are convinced that war or personal participation in war is contrary to the eternal laws of God they are bound to resist, though when they do so they separate themselves from the great community to which they belong. They assert the right to stand alone; they forfeit the privileges of that community in the vindication of what they take to be a higher law. They ought to be treated, if they are genuine, with great respect, for they are doing the most daring thing in the world. They are, as it were, renouncing their country in the interests of what they take to be the higher truth, the great and eternal laws that govern the world. But you will observe that when we realise the connection between the individual and the community to which we belong we begin to see how the individual is placed in the event of a great war, especially a war like this, which demands not only volunteers, but all the manhood of the country to take part in the conflict. The responsibility is really transferred from the individual to the community, to the State. It is no individual that makes the war; it is the country that makes the war, and therefore the precept of the Decalogue, "Thou shalt not kill," or, as we must interpret it, "Thou shalt not commit murder," applies to the State as a whole, not to the individual. It is to

that whole community or country that now the appeal of the law is made, "Thou shalt not kill." The individual is absolutely helpless. The man is taken whether he will or no, and made a member of a great army, and he is set to fight, to defend, to kill. He is absolutely helpless; and, as I conceive it, in following the command of the State in this connection he is taking up the cross just in proportion as he has a personal hatred of war and the methods of war. He goes as he is driven — driven by the necessity of his nation, by virtue of being a citizen of a great country; he is disgusted with what he must do, but he is convinced that he must do it, because the country and not he is responsible for what is done.

Because it is a nation and not an individual that makes a war, and the nation and not the individual is responsible for all that happens in war — all the appalling loss of life and all the suffering; just for that reason the issue which is now at stake becomes plain and significant to us all. What is being contested in the great conflict of Europe to-day is the possibility of carrying up into the life of nations the moral law which we believe applies to individuals; whether it will be possible to get the States of the Christian world to apply that moral law, which is admitted in the relations of man and man, to the relations of State and State, that is the issue at stake; it will be decided presently, and we shall take our part in deciding it. The State, as I conceive it, has to learn to obey the Ten Commandments as a State, just as the individual has had to learn to obey the Ten Commandments as

an individual; and not only has it to learn to obey the Ten Commandments, but, if we are to have a Christian civilisation, the State as a State has to learn to obey Christ's great commandment, the supreme law that He has laid down, "He that loseth his life shall gain it," and "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another."

The problem at issue to-day is this: Are the States of the world about to learn to keep the moral law? Is the great thought that applies to man as man at last to be applied to nations as nations? Are we to reach the point where the nations shall not commit murder, just as already we admit that the individual may not? That great thought that has dawned on the world, the League of Nations, has this great object in view; that was the thought of President Wilson, and, though it was derided at first by those who did not understand, when President Wilson brought the United States into the conflict he immediately set that great thought in the forefront. And by the mercy of God one of our own fellow-citizens, General Smuts, has come to this country and, with a gift for presenting truth that few of us possess, he has been urging it in a very telling and startling way upon us in speech after speech, confirming what President Wilson has stated to us, that the goal before us now is not to obtain a victory here or a victory there, but to reach the point where the nations can enter into such a moral and spiritual alliance with one another that the great law of which we are speaking can be applied in international relations.

"Thou shalt not Kill" and the War

It is one of the greatest moments in the life of the world that we are living through now; one of the greatest steps in the progress of humanity is about to be taken; in human evolution nothing has happened before like this; it is the great step by which nations raise themselves into a moral life and learn to behave to one another on a moral principle and in accordance with the eternal laws of God. Of course, ever since the Ten Commandments were given — and who knows how long ago that is? — the law has recognised this supreme Divine prohibition of murder, with all the regulations of the State that justify the execution of criminals, and very drastic measures with evil persons of many kinds; we have got it established and enforced in every civilised country that between man and man murder is prohibited. But now we are passing up to a higher point, where between nation and nation murder will be prohibited, and it will be as immoral and impossible for a nation to commit murder as it is now for a man to do so. We are entering on a new era in which for a nation to declare war upon another nation will be taken from the international point of view as equivalent to murder between man and man, and the nation will be treated at once as a criminal, isolated and overpowered by the whole body of humanity, precisely as now when a man attempts to commit murder he is seized upon by all the bystanders and carried into durance vile.

That is the goal to which we are moving. That is the issue which is at stake to-day. In all the confusion and the tangle of opinions and passions

we are able clearly to discern what is before the world, what has to be decided in the course of the next few months or at any rate years. We can see clearly what is necessary if that result is to be achieved. We may put it in this form: if that result is to be achieved — the great thought of the League of Nations — the whole of the world must surrender the idea that war is good, that it is a valuable discipline and training of national life, that it is a fit instrument of national expansion. I say the world must renounce that error, that arch-heresy in the religion of humanity. It must be theoretically abandoned. I believe theoretically it has been abandoned for the most part in this country and in America, and it must be abandoned everywhere. As men are very slow to act on a theory, and as the impulses and passions strive hard against our higher instincts, this erroneous view, this arch-heresy against religion and humanity has to be disproved and discredited not by argument but by desperate facts; and it is being disproved and discredited at the present moment. It is practically disproved to the thinking mind already; presently it will be disproved to every man in the street, and it will seem almost incredible that any nation or any body of men ever held the view that war was a good thing, that it was a necessary and excellent method of national development and a legitimate means of national expansion. That lesson is being taught us; it is being taught us through an agony and a horror that no man ever dreamed of three years ago, and that horror may have to be prolonged.

The lesson must be taught absolutely and for ever. It is being taught to the world slowly; the neutral world has learned it as well as the combatants; the combatants are learning it in fields of blood and in scenes of horror and shame that fill the hearts of all men and women with unutterable sorrow. While we are learning that lesson, during the long anguish of the lesson we must not faint or give way. We must remember that the world's great lessons are learned in tears and blood. This chastisement by which the blind and reluctant world is learning its great lesson is not lost. We may even say, knowing what God is, that if it could be any lighter than it is, it would be. If God could spare us any of the agonies He would, but we have to learn a lesson of this magnitude by sufferings and chastisements equal to the purpose in view.

We shuddered when we heard the other day that already the wounded in this war are more numerous than all the inhabitants of Great Britain and Ireland, and that the actually slain in this war are more numerous than all the inhabitants of Greater London. When we begin to realise that and think of our own country, and say to ourselves, "Does it mean that a number equal to all our great population has been wounded?" And when we go through London and say, "Does it mean that actually the whole population of London has been killed in battle?" then we shudder and the cry goes up, "How long, O Lord, how long?" Is there to be another period of three years with a similar result? Is there to be another vast army of wounded and slain? "How long, O Lord, how long?" we cry, but the

answer He gives is clear, "It must go on until not only Germany, but all the essentially Prussian minds throughout the world are convinced, and convinced once and for ever, that war is not a blessing but the supreme curse of the earth, that war is national murder and is as wicked and as futile as murder is within the State itself. That conviction must be wrought into the minds of all the inhabitants of this planet. The lesson is being taught by a Master Teacher who will not fail.

For what is the spirit which has wrought this disastrous havoc, crushed out the springing life of a generation, and brought a pall of sorrow down upon all the world? What is the spirit which has made the war? It is exactly what is described in the New Testament again and again, and it is called in some places "Antichrist." It is a certain spirit, a certain spirit of self-assertion, of brutal determination to override the laws of God and to despise the love of man, in the assertion of some power or influence which to the deluded minds appears more valuable than the love of peace and holiness. It is exactly what is described in the Bible, the Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or is worshipped, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God. The origin of the whole thing is a moral cause, a spiritual disease which is called Antichrist, and discerning eyes knew that it would come directly a thinker in Europe announced himself as Antichrist, when Nietzsche attempted for Germany to tear up the law of love and mercy, and to assert the diabolical law of self-

assertion and self-aggrandisement. We knew that that was Antichrist, and Antichrist has come.

Because that is the origin and the cause of it all, we may say, I think, without any undue pride or boasting, that all men who have risen up and taken arms against this overflowing scourge, all those who have been led to die that man may be free from it, all those who see the truth that love is life and hatred is death, all who demand for the future liberty and brotherhood and mutual co-operation as the only kind of life that becomes those who are the children of God, and therefore brothers and sisters of one another, all those who have caught the thought of the ultimate meaning of the Son of God coming into this world and setting His Cross in the midst of the world as the moral guide and spiritual impulse of men; all those who have seen that this is the meaning of the world's life and have therefore, without hesitation, thrown up all personal concerns and been ready to die to achieve the great purpose for which the world was no doubt made — all of those may be said to be fighting in Christ's cause against Antichrist, and they are, in a certain sense, one after another, filling up the measure of His sufferings Who died upon the Cross to save mankind.

I know how ironical it seems that the great redemption of man, that the way to fulfil the command, "Thou shalt not kill," for nations as well as men, should be found and made effectual only by this vast carnage and sacrifice of human life. I know what irony it seems, but it is not a greater irony than the irony of the Cross. It is exactly of

a piece with the Cross. To accomplish a great purpose there is a shedding of blood; the greatest purpose of all was accomplished by the Son of God shedding His blood for the world; and this great purpose, the redemption of man, is being accomplished by a vast shedding of blood. It seems terrible that there is no better way, but we know no other way yet. That way is to be found, as I trust, in the great thought that has come to us here, but hitherto we have not known how we could resist an evil like the one I refer to except by a resistance unto blood. We have to endure with courage and patience. We have to remember that all the world's great things have been produced in the same way, through the toil of noble hearts, through burning tears, and through the free sacrifice of our blood for one another. Then, believing that that is the way by which comes the redemption of the world, through the confusion and the garments steeped in blood and the horrors and anguish of war, we shall see " Christ's great Kingdom will come at last, the Kingdom of Peace and Love."

RISEN WITH CHRIST

By Ralph W. Inge, M.A., D.D., Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." — *Col.* iii. 1.

In times of prosperity men always tend to ignore and forget the future life. In adversity they remember it, and ask for proofs that there really is one. In former times it was easy to convince those who wished to believe that this life is not all. But we had been prosperous so long, and we had so secularised our civilisation, our aspirations, our morality, and even our religion, that the very idea of the next world had almost faded away. Reference to it was rare in conversation and literature. It was becoming rare even in the pulpit. The topic was reserved for letters of condolence, and then it was handled gingerly, as if it would not bear much pressure.

I think this is no exaggeration of our attitude towards the Easter message. But in all our lives there comes at times a great longing for assurance that if a man dies he shall live again. To hundreds of thousands of English people this longing has come with a poignant intensity through bereavement caused by this war. That lives so young and

fresh and full of promise, lives so justly dear to those who watched their growth in wisdom and stature and favour with God and man, should be suddenly cut short, seems an indictment against God's goodness, unless death is but the gate into a higher and more blessed life. Unless — and what do we know? What proofs or arguments can we bring that such is the truth? The whole tendency of our thought has been, as I said, secular. Even our clergy have appeared to be more interested in the unemployed than the unconverted. And so the bereaved looked in vain for comfort to their spiritual guides. And what has been the result? They have in their thousands sought for enchantments, like Balak. They have gone back to the old, discredited, barbarous superstitions of necromancy and so-called spiritualism. These sham sciences, which the Church has discountenanced from the first, these companion sciences of astrology, witchcraft, and other mischievous delusions, have once more stalked out into the light of day, and are unsettling the reason of hundreds. One has not the heart to denounce these superstitions with asperity, for the loving hearts that cling to them are very sore. But these alleged instances of a shadowy survival have nothing to do with the Christian hope of immortality. If as a very rare exception the dead could so communicate with the living, would it prove anything that we want to know? Certainly it would not prove human immortality, for the fitful activities of the disembodied spirit would not be likely to continue for long.

But I think we ought to go further, since we

wish to deal honestly with a question of the utmost importance, and ask what is the truth and value of the crude material presentment of our bodily resurrection which I suppose we were all taught as children. Are we seriously to picture a scene like the vision of dry bones in Ezekiel, a resuscitation of the bodies which have long been mouldering in the dust? Are we really to think of heaven as a place where arms and legs and lungs and stomachs will be useful? Are we to suppose, as Origen scornfully asks, that teeth will be provided for the wicked to gnash in hell? This was certainly not St. Paul's belief. He says bluntly, in a passage we all know, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." We are to be changed. When our earthly house has been dissolved we shall put on a spiritual clothing prepared for us by God. We shall put on immortality.

I know people differ greatly both in what they desire and in what they find it possible to believe. Some do desire passionately a continuance of the familiar life with which the body is inseparably associated. To take the great poets. Tennyson, we are told, grew crimson with excitement if he heard the resurrection called in question. "If human immortality be not true," he said, "then no God, but a mocking fiend, created us, and I would sink my head to-night in a chloroformed handkerchief, and have done with it all." Browning also clung to the belief, but with him reunion with his dead wife was the hope without which existence would be intolerable. George Meredith, who as a thinker, though not as a singer, deserves to rank

with these two great names, was content with a super-personal immortality. Of these three I am most in sympathy with Browning's faith, that love must be stronger than death.

But as for the survival of the psycho-physical organism by which we are known to others as individuals, when we think of our bodily and mental make-up, with all its inherited and acquired defects and infirmities, its disharmonies which have tormented us all our days, does the hidden man of the heart, the true self, really desire the perpetual partnership of such a companion, its refractory pupil, and sometimes its worst enemy? Do we want it resuscitated in another state of existence? Perhaps some people do — I do not know — but to me it seems that this outer self, this compound of soul and body which struts its little hour upon the stage, is not the self for which we desire immortality or endless survival. The outer self, if it is permitted to see the causes which it has cared for in this life seemingly on their way to triumph, if it has been granted the far-off vision of the King in His beauty, if it has learned something of the Divine government of the world, if it has lived and laboured and loved, may be content to say, when the end comes, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." What would be intolerable would be to have to believe that our ideals themselves will perish, that nothing worthy to live has any pledge that it will survive and prevail, that the world of values, which to every man and woman of faith is his own real world,

is a dream, and has no relation to the world of fact.

I beg you to consider whether this is not really what you care about most — this, and not the resuscitation of the petty, self-centered existence, cribbed, cabined, confined on every side, which we have to live now. Is not this what we want to be sure of, namely, that whatever has value in God's sight, whether it belongs to us or not, is safe for evermore, and free from the doom of decay and death?

Well, I believe that we have quite as good a right to believe in the indestructible and eternal existence of the objects of our faith and hope and love as anything we call facts. We are too timid, I think, about letting faith speak in the strong, confident tones which it desires to use. The world of values is the spiritual world, and the spiritual world is no ideal picture; it is objectively real.

Does this kind of immortality sound impersonal? I mean it not so. The self that desires a life eternal, which is knowledge of God and Christ, is the self that will share it. We are what we are interested in, we are what we love. Our soul is not, as men often seem by their words to suppose, a valuable piece of property which we may save or lose. Our soul is our self, and it wins its immortal life by dying and rising with Christ, and living the risen life of the things which are above.

What other sense can we give to St. Paul's habitual language about communion with the risen and ascended Christ? What is the heavenly Christ in relation to the world and to human souls but the

fountain of all spiritual goodness and wisdom and beauty in the world which was made through Him? And what is the meaning of rising with Christ, knowing the power of His resurrection, unless it be by the ascent of the soul from the things that are seen, which are temporal, to the things that are not seen, which are eternal? And what other immortality would not seem poor and unsatisfying beside the promise that we shall continually dwell with Him, and be made like unto Him in His eternal and glorious kingdom?

I have no wish to shake anyone's belief in those pictures of our future state, crude as they seem to myself, which have so often been presented as the orthodox Christian teaching. Some people, I dare say, value them highly, and on so mysterious a subject it may be well that all our notions alike are no better than children's picture-books, symbols very unlike the reality. But of this I am convinced, that the more spiritual and the less self-centered our thoughts and hopes about the future life are, the easier we shall find it to believe them. Some popular dogmas are rejected by earnest minds because they are not good enough to be true, and I think myself that some of our popular eschatology falls under this head. When we think about the eternal world let us try to put away from us our private hopes and fears. Let us think of Christ at the right hand of God, and all that this means to the world. Let us think of Christ as bearing with Him in triumph the whole treasure of spiritual values, all that we love and admire, all that we long to see victorious, bearing that treasure to that

region of eternal safety, where we may one day join Him, and where our dear ones who have died for England have gone already. "The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God, and no torment shall touch them." They live, for God is the God of the living, not the God of the dead. You remember that this is our Lord's argument against those who say that there is no future life. I think, then that this belief is credible — nay, I am sure that it is true.

A GREAT BELIEF AND A GREAT EXPERIENCE

By J. D. Jones, M.A., D.D.

"It was the good pleasure of God . . . to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles." — *Gal.* i. 15, 16.

In this chapter Paul is giving an account of his spiritual experience; he is relating the steps that led him to become a Christian preacher.

At one period of his career nothing seemed more unlikely — indeed, humanly speaking, nothing seemed more impossible — than that Saul of Tarsus should ever become a Christian, much less a Christian preacher. For he was the deadliest opponent of the Christian Church; he was its most implacable antagonist; he was its most relentless persecutor. He says in this chapter that as a young man he persecuted the Church of God and made havoc of it; and in his defence and advocacy of the Jewish religion he stood head and shoulders above all his contemporaries, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of the fathers. But at a certain point in his life that unlikely and seemingly impossible thing happened. With startling suddenness, the fierce and intolerant antagonist of the Christian faith became a believer; the persecutor turned preacher; the man who had tried the hardest to

destroy the Christian religion became its mightiest missionary.

What brought this startling and almost incredible change about? This is Paul's own account of it: "It was the good pleasure of God . . . to reveal His Son in me." The reference undoubtedly is to the stupendous event that happened to the Apostle as he travelled to Damascus. Whenever Paul rehearses his own spiritual history (and he does so more than once in his speeches), he always starts *there*. That never-to-be-forgotten day when the light which was brighter than the noonday sun shone about him was his spiritual birthday. And this is what happened on that tremendous day: "It was the good pleasure of God . . . to reveal His Son in me."

But what exactly does the Apostle mean when he says that God revealed His Son "in him"? Bishop Lightfoot says that the phrase "in me" does not speak of a revelation made inwardly to himself, but of a revelation made through him to others. The Bishop, that is to say, makes the Apostle to be not the recipient, but the instrument of the revelation. According to his interpretation, the phrase would be more accurately translated, "It was the good pleasure of God . . . to reveal His Son *through* me."

It is something like presumption to differ from any verdict which Bishop Lightfoot pronounces, but I venture to think that in this particular instance he does less than justice to the Apostle's meaning. The Apostle is here speaking of something that happened to himself — of a great and revolutionising

inward experience. "It pleased God to reveal His Son *within* me." It was something which happened within the region of his own soul. I am not going to argue from that — as some German theologians do — that the whole Damascus episode may be regarded as being from first to last a purely subjective experience. There was a real objective appearance of the Risen Christ to Paul — as really objective as any appearance vouchsafed to those who were apostles before him. But this objective appearance was accompanied or immediately followed by an inner experience. When he saw Christ and heard Him speak, the truth about Christ's person was flashed into his soul on the instant. He knew that the Person against whom he had so furiously raged was none other than the Son of God.

The implications of that objective revelation only disclosed themselves gradually; but as Paul meditated on the life and death of Jesus, whom he now knew to be the Son of God, the meaning of His death began to break upon his soul; he saw it as the great sacrifice for sin; he found for himself the rest and release he had sought in vain in the Jewish law; in his own heart and conscience he felt Christ's healing and redeeming power. The historic Christ became Christ felt, known and personally appropriated. The Christ revealed to him by an outward act became a Christ known and loved by an inward experience. And it was then Paul became a really converted man — not simply when God revealed His Son to him, but when He revealed His Son *within* him; not when the real nature of Christ was revealed

to his mind, but when the redeeming power of Christ was actually felt in his soul.

Now it was as the result of this double experience that Paul became a Christian preacher. Perhaps I am wrong in speaking of it as a double experience. Perhaps I ought rather to speak of it as one great experience in two stages — first intellectual apprehension and then personal experience; first Christ recognised for who He was, and, secondly, Christ felt as a power. The first is incomplete without the second; the second is impossible without the first. It was the combination of the two that made Paul the preacher he became. Here in this double experience you get the secret of his immense and untiring missionary zeal.

There never was a missionary like St. Paul. The Word was like a fire in his bones. He passed from land to land like a flame. He was willing to become all things to all men if by all means he could save some. He spent himself out for souls. He thought it worth his while to sacrifice position, power, fame, in order to travel from country to country preaching Christ and Him as crucified. And the secret of his tireless zeal was this — he had a mighty belief ratified and confirmed by a mighty personal experience. It had pleased God to reveal His Son to him and in him.

My brethren, it will profit us for a few minutes to look at the great creed and the great experience which were the secrets of St. Paul's evangelical passion. They remain the abiding and the only sufficient motives to missionary zeal.

First of all, then, back of St. Paul's tireless labours

prompting them and inspiring them, there lay *a mighty belief*. Paul believed that Christ was the only Son of the everlasting God. That was the revelation given to him on the way to Damascus. Prior to that great happening he had thought of Jesus as an imposter and a deceiver of the people. He had honestly thought so. Paul, even in his unregenerate days, was honest. If he persecuted the Christian people, it was because he felt it to be his plain duty; it was because he felt he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. It was in ignorance, not in malice, that he did it.

But the great light that shone around him as he journeyed to Damascus dispelled and scattered his ignorance. It showed him who Jesus really was. It revealed Him to his astonished eyes as the mighty Son of God, declared to be such with power by the resurrection from the dead. In the light of this revelation of Christ's real nature, he re-read the historic life, and especially the historic death. That death became something unique, solitary, unparalleled! For it was the willing sacrifice of the Son of God! Paul found in it the one sufficient sacrifice for sin, of which all other sacrifices were but types and shadows. In it he saw God dealing with sin — judging it, bearing it, delivering men from it.

The cross was not simply something suffered, it was something achieved; it was not simply something endured, it was something effected; it was not simply something borne, it was something achieved and done. In it God accomplished the exodus, and by His own mighty act delivered the

world from sin's bondage and power. In it God was reconciling the world unto Himself, not reckoning their trespasses unto them.

Damascus gave that mighty creed to Paul. He has little to say about the gentle, lowly Jesus, "the friend and lover of men." He does not dwell, as we are apt to do, upon the humble circumstances of His earthly lot; he does not emphasize, as we delight to do, His sweet and gracious humanities. It is the central significance of that life that attracts and absorbs Paul. And the significance of it was this — that God was in Christ. He does not linger upon the mere trappings and circumstances of Christ's life; he penetrates to its core and centre. God was in that life, God was in that death.

That creed made Paul a preacher. It gave him his message, his "*word*" to the nations. And it was not only Paul's word, it was the Church's word, too. "Whether it be I or they," he says, "so we preached and so ye believed." It was indeed this message that made the Church. For you must always remember that it was not the Church that made the Gospel, but it was the Gospel that made the Church. It was not the Church that formulated the mighty creed that God was in Christ; it was the creed that created the Church. That was how the Church came to be — certain people saw Jesus alive after His passion, and in the light of the resurrection they knew Him to be the Son of God. But for that great belief that God was in Christ there never would have been a Church, because there never would have been a Gospel. But the revelation of the Son of God to men at one and the same time

created the Church and gave it its Gospel, a Gospel so mighty that it fired its preachers with a quenchless passion for proclaiming it. Back of all Paul's measureless labours, back of all the efforts of the primitive Church, making it the aggressive and victorious Church it was, was this great faith in Jesus as the Son of God.

Nothing but the same great creed will make the Church an aggressive missionary, evangelistic Church to-day. You cannot have a Church without a creed. There is a certain dogma — as Dr. Forsyth puts it in his latest and most suggestive book — the simple statement of God's great act, which is essential to the very idea of the Church. It constitutes the Church, it creates the Church, it gives it footing. The Church exists to proclaim certain action on the part of God; that is its *κηρυγμα*, its message. And that central message which the Church exists to proclaim constitutes its dogma, its essential and indispensable creed. It is not something which the Church holds; it is something which holds the Church. And that essential and indispensable creed is the same to-day as in apostolic times — the belief that God was in Christ. Nothing less than that will make a Church; certainly nothing less than that will make an aggressive and triumphant Church.

You cannot have a Church without a creed; you cannot have a mighty Church without a great creed.

Someone may object that I am confusing together *creed* and *faith*. "According to your faith be it unto you," it is written in the Scriptures. And *faith* there does not mean intellectual belief, but personal adhesion and surrender and trust and

consecration. Granted at once. It is according to our *faith*, our personal devotion and consecration and trust, it shall be unto us; and *faith* is not synonymous with *creed*. But while not synonymous, they stand in most close and intimate relationship to each other. For if, on the one hand, a man may have a creed without a faith, no man can have a faith without a creed. And the bigger the creed, the mightier the faith it inspires. And for a creed to be big it is not necessary that it should be long. Bigness is not a matter of quantity, but of quality.

This fundamental apostolic creed that God was in Christ was a mighty and tremendous creed, and it created a mighty and victorious faith. And the same great creed would create the same sort of enthusiastic and irresistible faith to-day.

But, have we got it?

Has the Son of God been revealed to us? We have been passing through difficult and troublous times (I am thinking now not of the difficulties and troubles which have come to us as a nation, but of the difficulties and troubles that have overtaken us as Churches and as believing men). For the past fifty years faith has been fighting for its life. And under the pressure of criticism, and to meet the objections of science, we have been in danger of discarding one article of belief after another, until the belief that was left was of the most scanty and exiguous and ineffective sort. It may well be that the minute and detailed creeds in which our fathers believed are impossible for us. They would place upon our shoulders a burden too heavy to be borne. It may be that it was essential to lighten the ship of

the Christian religion of some of its superfluous credal cargo. But, my brethren, have we not often gone far beyond the throwing overboard of superfluous cargo? Have we not in many cases been tearing up and throwing away the timbers and planks of the ship itself?

A Christianity *minus* the divinity of Christ, *minus* the Resurrection, *minus* the Atonement, will not float at all; it will sink beyond hope of salvage.

And is not a great deal of our modern Christianity an emasculated and devitalised thing of that kind? The Christianity of the Apostles was a rich and full and vital thing. It had at its heart a tremendous belief in certain acts of God. It declared that in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, God, the Eternal God, entered human life. It declared that in the cross of Jesus God dealt with human sin and delivered men from its bondage; it declared that in the resurrection of Jesus, God triumphed over sin and death, and demonstrated His supremacy and sovereignty; it declared that through the Spirit of the living Christ, God was with His people always, to help and succour and save them.

This Apostolic Gospel, with its belief in an incarnate God and Atonement and Resurrection and the Indwelling Spirit, was a mighty and tremendous Gospel.

But we have reduced it and impoverished it and whittled it away. The comrade Jesus, the peasant preacher who has certain wonderful words to His credit, who is the subject of so much of our speech in these days, is but the palest shade of the atoning, risen, glorified Son of God of whom the New Testa-

ment apostles speak. What wonder we do not exercise the apostolic power! The fact is, we can never possess an exultant and triumphant faith with an attenuated and impoverished creed. And that has been the secret of our trouble — we have thinned and refined away our creed, and reduced it to a poor minimum, and there has been no power in it to generate faith. There has been nothing in it to kindle enthusiasm and passion and zeal. Our scanty and exiguous belief has found its logical result in a feeble faith. It is back to the great apostolic belief — that God was in Christ — that we must come, if we want to exercise apostolic power.

This is specially and emphatically so if we wish to see the Church becoming an aggressive, evangelistic, missionary Church. I am not sure that a Church can hold together at all with a less creed than this — that God was in Christ. I am quite sure it can never conquer and possess the world. "This is the victory that overcometh the world," says the Apostle John, "even our faith." And then he adds: "And who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" The requisite faith can only spring from that belief. The only man equal to the task of conquering the world is the man who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. Who else, indeed, will take the trouble? If a man believes less than that, if he believes only that Jesus was a prophet, though the greatest of them, why should he trouble to send the news of Him to China, or India, or the seas?

An exiguous belief of that kind never bred a missionary, never started a missionary society and

cannot sustain one. The only men who will ever attempt to conquer and possess the world are the people who believe that Jesus is the Son of God; who believe that in Christ, God entered our world and our life, and did the great deed necessary for our salvation; who believe that Christ is not one prophet amongst many, but God manifest in the flesh. It was that mighty belief that made Paul a preacher and a missionary. It is that mighty belief that has inspired the pioneers and missionaries and martyrs of all the succeeding centuries. It is that mighty belief that inspires the prayers and the generosity of the thousands and tens of thousands who carry the world on their heart to-day. From it has sprung the heroism and devotion and sacrifice of the mission field. On it every missionary society depends for its very life. "Who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" On any lesser belief that that missionary effort becomes a superfluity, an impertinence, an absurdity. To play fast and loose with this apostolic and fundamental belief is to cut the nerve of missionary effort. It is impossible to whittle away the evangelic faith and retain the evangelistic passion. It is impossible to surrender the apostolic faith and preserve the apostolic zeal and devotion. Behind any world-evangelism, justifying it and inspiring it, there must be the great belief that Jesus is the Son of God.

Now let me pass on to speak briefly of the second thing that made Paul a missionary. Back of Paul's tireless evangelistic labours there lay not simply a great belief, but also a great *personal experience.*

A Great Belief and a Great Experience

As a result of what happened on the way to Damascus, Paul not only discovered who Jesus really was, He also *felt* His releasing and redeeming power. The Son of God was not simply revealed *to* Him, He was also revealed *in* Him. That is to say, Paul knew Christ to be the Son of God not simply by seeing Him risen and glorified; he knew Him to be the Son of God because He did God's forgiving and saving work in his own heart and life.

Especially God's saving and forgiving work. Paul was plagued and condemned by the sinfulness of his own soul. He strove with all the energy of his strong and vehement nature after the righteousness which is of the law. But all in vain! The more he tried, the more calamitously he seemed to fail; so that he was a complete stranger to rest of heart and peace. And then Christ came and did for him what the law could not do. He loosed him from his sins. He saved his guilty soul. He delivered him from all his fears. He set him right with God. He gave him the spirit of sonship; so that through believing in Christ he became the happy possessor of joy and peace.

Paul knew Christ not simply by way of intellectual apprehension of His Person, but by actual experience of His grace. He was not simply a historic Person to Paul; He was an inward power. "It pleased God to reveal His Son *in me*." You have noticed how constantly in his letters Paul speaks of the Christ whom he himself had felt and known. He has but little to say of Christ after the flesh. He has a great deal to say about the Christ who lived and worked in his own soul. He went from one

end of the world to the other preaching a forgiving and saving Christ. It was the Christ he himself had experienced. Paul himself was a forgiven man. "Faithful is the saying," he said, "and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." "To save sinners" without exception or distinction. And Paul's warrant for preaching such a mighty Gospel was that he himself had experienced it — "of whom I am chief."

He went from land to land preaching a helping and enabling Christ — a Christ who enabled men to bear sorrow, to conquer temptation, to triumph over death. His warrant for it all was that Christ had done all that in his own case. "I can do all things through Christ who empowers me." Paul spoke what he knew and testified what he had seen. If he spoke of Christ as the Son of God, it was because he had experienced His Divine power and grace. "It was the good pleasure of God . . . to reveal His Son *in me.*" And it needed this personal experience or Christ's grace and mercy to make Paul the missionary he became.

I am not going to modify what I have already said about the Apostle's creed. He would never have become an Apostle without that revelation of who Christ was. But that by itself would not have been sufficient. A mere creed is apt to leave men cold. But when the creed becomes transmuted into an experience, it becomes an energy, vivid, intense, passionate, resistless. And that was the secret of Paul's flaming zeal — he knew Christ not simply by intellectual apprehension, but by inward experience. He knew Him as the Divine Saviour

not simply because he had seen His glory, but because he had felt and known His saving power. Paul was himself a forgiven, redeemed, regenerated and kept soul. "It was the good pleasure of God . . . to reveal His Son in him."

It is the personal experience of Christ that makes the Gospeller. It is the "Son of God" *in* a man that makes him a mighty preacher and missionary. It was so with Luther. The correct intellectual creed was his right away from the beginning, or, at any rate, from the beginning of his monastic days. In the words of the old creed he expressed belief in Jesus Christ God's only Son our Lord. But he might have remained a droning monk to the end of his days had he never got any further than that. But one day it pleased God to reveal His Son *in* him. Martin Luther had a personal experience of Christ as the Forgiver and Saviour. It was that personal experience of Christ's saving grace that fired Luther's soul and touched his lips, and turned the monk into a prophet, and gave him such a mighty Gospel that it liberated and regenerated half Europe.

It was so also with John Wesley. He was brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord as a boy in the vicarage at Epworth. The right belief was his from his early days. He believed in Jesus as the Son of God. That belief made him a High Churchman at Oxford; it sent him out to be a minister in Georgia. But if he had never got beyond that, he would have remained a prim, respectable and ineffective curate to the end of his days. But one day it was the good pleasure of God to reveal His Son *in* him. The creed was

transmuted into an experience. It is a familiar story — the story of what happened in the little meeting-house in Aldersgate Street — but let me repeat it once again: "I went," he writes in his journals, "very unwillingly to a Society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's 'Preface to the Epistle to the Romans.' About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for my salvation. And an assurance was given me that He had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death." It was that tremendous experience that made Wesley an evangelist. It warmed his heart, it loosened his tongue. It gave him passion and intensity and zeal. He preached the Gospel with a new accent and a new power. It was his own experience of Christ as a Forgiver that sent him flaming from one end of the land to the other; it was that same experience that made him so mighty a preacher that tens of thousands of people as they listened to him were born again of the Spirit and religion once more became a reality in England.

To make the preacher, the mighty preacher, the preacher who has the passion for souls, more is needed than a belief that Jesus is the Son of God. He must be known as such in the preacher's own soul. The Son of God must be revealed not simply to Him, but *in* him.

Following upon the great belief made vital by the great experience, there will come *great preaching*. "It was the good pleasure of God," says the Apostle,

" to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles." The revelation was in order to the preaching and the preaching was dependent upon the revelation. The one was the condition of the other. The fact is, it takes a forgiven man to preach adequately about forgiveness; it takes a saved man to preach worthily of a Saviour; it takes a man whose heart is filled with the love of God to preach about the love which passeth knowledge.

The one indispensable qualification for the preacher is not eloquence or learning, or even theological orthodoxy — these things are good and they increase the efficiency of the preacher; but the one indispensable thing which a man must have before he can be a preacher at all, is this personal experience of the redeeming Son of God in his own soul. The Son of God must be revealed *in* us, in order that we may preach.

My brethren — preachers along with me of the Holy Gospel — have we ourselves got this experience of Christ? People say of us sometimes that our preaching is tame and lifeless and cold. That may be so if we know Christ simply as a historic figure, or if He is to us simply a subject for theological debate. We can then discuss Him quite coolly and dispassionately. But no man who has had Christ revealed *in* him, who knows the joy of forgiveness and the overwhelming wonder of His salvation can be cold and lifeless when speaking about Him. " To whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much " — and the much love will kindle the heart and lend fire and passion to the speech. Perhaps that is what we need in order to make our preaching a

power — to have Christ revealed *in* us, to have a vivid personal experience of His forgiving and saving grace.

Let us humbly seek it, if we have not already received it. Let us who have had the experience return to it and perpetually renew it, that we may preserve our first love. Great preaching is impossible without this great experience. "It was the good pleasure of God to reveal His Son in me . . . in order that I might preach."

And the impulse to preach that came to Paul with the great revelation was an impulse to preach Him *everywhere*. "It was the good pleasure of God to reveal His Son in me . . . in order that I might preach Him among the Gentiles." The Christ whom Paul experienced was One who brought peace and joy to the soul, who reconciled man and God. He was not merely a Deliverer for the Jew, He was a Saviour for the world. His missionary ardour sprang from his experience.

The sequence is an inevitable and a necessary one. There can be no missionary zeal apart from this experience, but where the experience has taken place the zeal inevitably follows. The modern missionary enterprise is the product of the Evangelical revival. Hearts which — like that of John Wesley — had been strangely warmed by a personal experience of Christ's saving grace were all aflame to tell the world about Him. Those are the only people who will ever be enthusiastic about missions.

Missions are the final test of a vital religion, of a real personal experience of Christ. People whose interests in Christ are merely intellectual or senti-

mental, who have never known in themselves how amazing a thing forgiveness is, how wonderful a thing salvation is, will at best take but a languid interest in missions. But the Word will be like a fire in the bones of the forgiven and redeemed man.

Thank God, there are in our Churches multitudes of men and women who have had Christ revealed in them, who know Him as the Son of God in their own lives, and their love and zeal have prompted them to pour such gifts into the Treasury as have filled our mouths with laughter and our tongues with singing.

We are in the mood to sing *Te Deums* to-day for the great things God has done for us. But new tasks and larger duties call to us. We want to do more than maintain the present work.

We want to carry the Gospel to lands still unoccupied and peoples still unevangelised.

To do that we want *all* our people in all our Churches to have this great transfiguring and inspiring experience. That is our great and supreme need — a revival of personal religion, a new experience of the forgiving and saving grace of Christ. "I should have painted Him much better if I had loved Him more," Doré is reported to have said about a picture of the Christ. And we should all serve Him better, and sacrifice more freely for Him, if we loved Him more, and love springs in turn from inward and personal experience of His grace and power. That is our need. Let us pray for it. "Warm our coldness we implore." Such a renewal of vital religion would dispel all our difficulties. It would give us enthusiasm, passion, power. When it is

the good pleasure of God to reveal His Son in us, we shall be eager to preach Him among the Gentiles —

" Give the Word, and of the preacher,
Speed the foot and touch the tongue,
Till on earth by every creature
Glory to the Lamb be sung.

THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD

By J. H. Jowett, M.A., D.D.

"The Holy Spirit witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and imprisonments await me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." — *Acts* xx. 23, 24.

"Bonds and imprisonments await me." And they were by no means unfamiliar experiences to the Apostle Paul. This man was never allowed to be at rest. His circumstances were never free from tribulations. You will seek in vain along this man's road for green pastures and still waters and quiet nooks filled with soft fragrance, where the only sound is the song of birds. The Apostle Paul is always on the hard road, and he is always confronted by a thousand brutal antagonisms. If I wish to image to my own mind the character of his journeyings, I recall to myself a bit of strangely rugged and uncertain country just beyond the Alpine village of Engelberg, where you are guided in your goings by red dashes of paint splashed against the out-jutting rocks of the countryside. You are guided by a red line. And the Pauline road is a red road. You move from place to place guided by the crimson marks of pain and sacrifice.

Take a glance along the road, and see if the crim-

son emblem is not an unbroken line. Damascus — "They watched him night and day to kill him." Antioch — "They raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts." Inconium — "An assault was made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews, to use them despitefully and to stone them." Lystra — "There came thither certain Jews, who persuaded the people and having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead." Philippii — "And they laid many stripes upon them, and cast them into prison." Thessalonica — "Certain lewd fellows of the baser sort set the city in an uproar and assaulted the house." Berea — "The Jews came thither also and stirred up the people." Ephesus — "I fought with beasts at Ephesus." And so on, and so on, red splashes like the obscure road to Engelberg, red dashes of pain and sacrifice all the way to Rome.

And then, my brethren, to add to the wonder of it, we are told that this very much oppressed apostle of the Lord dragged about a body which was heavily weighted with physical infirmity. He only now and again refers to it, and with changing modes of expression. At one time, you remember, he refers to it as a thorn in the flesh, the deep root of constant and abiding pain. And then again he describes it as an earthen vessel, so very fragile, easily chipped, easily shivered and broken. And then I remember that again he borrows an image from his own trade, and he refers to the body as a light tent; so very fragile is the structure that even the slightest movement of the wind can carry it away. But, my

brethren, what this frail body got through and what things it was able to endure! I suppose the Apostle Paul did most of his journeyings on foot, and he was exposed to the rigours and the hardships of a most exacting climate, the extraordinarily bitter cold of the heights and the enervating heat of the plains. I do not think I ever quite was able to appreciate what the Apostle Paul meant by thas single word "in cold" until three years ago I war travelling over part of the same road in Asia Minot over which the great Apostle journeyed. The rigours of that most exacting climate were borne by this man of exceedingly frail and fragile frame. Three times he suffered shipwreck, three times he was beaten with rods, five times he was flogged with Roman thongs, in fastings often, in hunger and thirst. And yet this sick man, always so sick, so ailing, so afflicted and so exposed, buffeted by the messenger of Satan, trudged about for a whole generation as the ambassador of redeeming grace. And now at the dawn of a second generation he is still on the same hard road and possessed by the spirit of the same dauntless courage, "knowing nothing of the things which shall befall me, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city that bonds and imprisonments await me." That is to say, the blood-red line of sacrificial and painful experience is to be his to the very end of the way. What a road, brethren! Yes, and what a traveller! What a commission! Yes, and what a glorious hero of the faith!

Now how did he face it all? If this man had a road of that character to travel, and if this was the

kind of infirmity with which he was weighted all along the way, how did he face it? In what mood and spirit did he march along the road? And how did he face these multiplied antagonisms? What had he at the back of him? Better still, what had he at the heart of him?

And what I have to say, in the first place, is that he had behind him and within him the energising secret of a tremendous experience. Something happened to this man on the way to Damascus, and what happened regenerated his whole being and transformed his entire life. I would have you notice, what indeed we cannot forget, that it was with the secret of Damascus glowing within him that he confronted Jerusalem and Rome. What happened on the way to Damascus changed the entire perspective of his life. It is as though some volcanic emergence or majestic earthquake were to alter the contour of the countryside.

What experience was it with which he travelled over this countryside? He refers to it again and again with changing imagery and expression. What happened on the road? This happened. He says, "I was apprehended by Christ Jesus." It is a singularly vivid, full-coloured, and picturesque word. It is used elsewhere in the New Testament of the overtaking of a traveller by a robber on a lonely road. "I was apprehended." The hands of the Lord Jesus fell upon this man suddenly, as the hands of a robber would fall upon a traveller. He was gripped, and he was gripped with the seizure of complete possession. My brethren, on the way to Damascus this man was overtaken by Jesus,

and from that very startling moment Jesus never let him go. "I was apprehended by Christ Jesus."

And then hear another sentence in which he describes the momentous experience. He says of the Lord Jesus, "He was seen of me also." Our English word does not bring out quite the fulness of the original word. It means the wide-open eyes of a child. It means the contemplation of an overwhelming surprise. "He was seen of me." You have almost got to prolong the word and put wonder into it, so full of surprise was the Apostle's experience. "He was seen of me also." And then again, in another place, he adds, "Have I not seen the Lord Jesus?" But that is another word. It is a very intimate word. It suggests a clear discernment, as though the Lord were coming nearer to his humble door, and His hand was on the latch. He saw Him, in the first place, as a surprising presence far away. Now he sees Him just at the door with His hand upon the latch. And now hear him again. "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." The latch has been lifted, and the Lord is now within. "The Lord liveth in me." This man's life has now become the temple of the Lord's indwelling presence, and the very breath of the Lord makes the atmosphere of his holy place.

I will only mention one other sentence which I think is descriptive of the happenings on the road to Damascus. "For to me to live is Christ." Not that his individuality is suppressed, only possessed, infused, enthused. He hands himself over every

moment to his Saviour, and his Saviour hands his personality back to him every moment, steeped and sealed in the consecrating wonder of the Spirit of the Lord.

Well, my brethren, all these things happened on the way to Damascus. It was with the great secret in his soul, glowing in his deepest life, that this man breasted the difficulties of the crowded road. It is not the old Saul who now faces the menace of Jerusalem, and the stones of Lystra, and the apathy of Athens, and the corruptions of Corinth and Rome. It is the old Saul *plus* Jesus. It is the old Saul seized and entered and possessed by the Lord Jesus Christ, literally a whole heaven of a difference. It is Saul made over again. It is Paul, a new creation in Christ Jesus. This is the man who walked down the crowded road.

And if I may add another suggestion from the Word of God descriptive of the mood and spirit in which he met his antagonisms, I should say this, that he met them in the profound consciousness of an immeasurable obligation. This man had been made free, and now he felt that his very freedom bound him again to the One who had delivered him. He had been led into the riches of grace, and now he yearned that every child of God should share the same glorious estate. His spiritual riches made him the debtor of everybody who was spiritually poor. And therefore this man went about looking everywhere into the eyes of his fellow men and wishing to share with everybody the unfathomable riches into which he himself had been led by the Lord. He was always trying to give away

what the Lord had given to him, and he could never overtake and discharge the debt. The more he gave away the more he had to give, until the very weight of the glory gloriously overburdened him with the sense of endless obligation. "Necessity," he said in a great word, "necessity is laid upon me." Think of that, good people. The man is ever boasting of his freedom. Why, the chimes of spiritual liberty are ringing everywhere in the letters of the Apostle Paul, and yet he says, "Necessity is laid upon me." "Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel." But that is not the obligation, the gloomy obligation that is born of grievous bondage; it is the blessed necessity that is born of sovereign grace. This man is a bondslave just because he is free. He is the bondslave of the Lord Jesus Christ Who gave him his freedom. "The love of Christ constraineth me," literally "puts me into bonds." That was the way this man met every antagonism. That was the way this man knocked at every closed door, as free, and yet as bound; sharing the unsearchable riches of Christ, and yet in debt to everybody.

Now, my brethren, great lovers of that kind, swayed by these mighty constraints, will not be turned aside just when thorns are found in the way, or when Apollyon straddles across the path, or when a lion leaps out of the thicket, or when some door remains obstinately closed at which they have been hammering through the dark watches of a long and tedious night. The men who are moved by constraints of this kind do not turn aside when a lion appears in the path.

And now I bring you straight up to my text: "None of these things move me." My fellow Englishmen, none of these things moved him. Cried this heavily-indebted lover of the Lord, "I set no value upon my life. I bear with joy the finishing of my course, and the completing of my ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." Such was the great mood and such was the great spirit with which this great Apostle trudged along his heavy road.

Well, now I am ready to ask a further question. What did the Apostle conceive to be his mission as he moved along the road? And I cannot tell you how grateful I am that I have not to create an answer, for I find the answer completely revealed to me in my text. He says that when he went with that frail body of his along the road that was just crowded with antagonisms, he felt that what he had to do, the only thing that he had to do, was to testify the gospel of the grace of God. I say this man with the Damascus secret in his spirit, swayed by the mighty constraint of redeeming love, with a sense of indebtedness that no service could ever discharge, went anywhere and everywhere testifying the gospel of redeeming grace. He went to Ephesus, that home of mixed superstitions, testifying the gospel of the grace of God. He went to Corinth, the centre of a polished materialism, testifying the gospel of the grace of God. He went to Rome, that very centre and throne of a hard imperialism, testifying the gospel of the grace of God. Everywhere he went, crossing mountain roads, trudging through sultry plains, crossing stormy seas, that every-

where he might testify the gospel of the grace of God.

And what did he mean by grace? I am perfectly aware that when I ask a question like that I have touched the supreme difficulty which every minister of my congregation has been contending with for years, for all through our ministry we have been trying to tell something about grace, and when we have done our best we have scarce begun. Did I ever say to any of my congregations here in England that one of my congregation at Carrs Lane went away into the Western States, and he wanted to send his minister some little idea of his enormous environment and the character of it? And I remember there came by post one morning a letter with just these words enclosed, "A sample of my environment," and it was just the feather of a bird, a lovely, indescribably beautiful feather of a tropical bird. He said, "Just a sample of my environment." And I have often felt, when I have been trying to speak to my people about the grace of the Lord Jesus, and when I have done my utmost and my best, I have only given them a feather, perhaps a beautiful thing, but still only the beginning of a continent of the beauty and glory that are hidden in that most marvellous word "Grace."

What is Grace? Grace is more than mercy. It is more than tender mercy. It is more than a multitude of tender mercies. Grace is more than love. It is more than innocent love. Grace is holy love, but it is holy love in spontaneous movement going out in eager quest toward the unholy and the unlovely, that by the ministry of its own sacrifice

it might redeem the unholy and the unlovely into its own strength and beauty. The grace of God is holy love on the move to thee and me and the like of thee and me. It is God, unmerited, undeserved, going out towards the children of men, that He might win them into the glory and brightness of His own likeness. That is only the little feather of a bird that lifts its wings in a beautiful world.

When the Apostle wants to show you what a big thing grace is, he mentions some other big thing, and when he has mentioned other big things he brings in the biggest thing, which to him is incomparable, the grace of the Lord God, and when he brings in the bigger thing the lesser thing that seems so big is entirely eclipsed.

Bear with me if I mention one or two. I cannot do anything better than magnify the grace of God. The Apostle looks about and lays hold of guilt, the guilt of the race, one of the biggest things he knew, and places it before us in all its appalling frown and menace, and when we are just overwhelmed by it he testifies to the gospel of the grace of God, and lo! the guilt is dissolved, just as the ice and snow and the grip of the frost are loosened in the genial warmth of the spring. He sings, "We have forgiveness through the riches of His grace."

And then he looks for another big thing, and he lays hold of the sin of the race. Who can portray the manifold sin of the race with such terror as Paul? And when Paul has dealt with sin as he does in Romans i. and ii., when he has so dealt with it that sin spreads on every side in black and presumptuous sovereignty, then he testifies the gospel

of the grace of God which overthrows its deadly control. He says, "Where sin abounded, grace doth much more abound." It is just like the fulness of the ocean receiving into its unfathomable grave the sewage and the gathered pollutions of some great city. It is like the Atlantic floods receiving a corpse. "Where sin abounded, grace doth much more abound." The bigger thing is eclipsed by the biggest thing, which is the grace of the Lord.

And then he looks round again for a big thing, and he sees the discords of the race, our jars, our jealousies, our antipathies, and our hatreds, all our racial clashes and divisions, and when we are just appalled by the savage severity of the alienations, he testifies the grace of the Lord which brings down what he calls "the middle wall of partition." Hear it in this most warlike day. He testifies the grace of God which breaks down the middle wall of partition and brings the scattered peoples into clear and vital union, into sweet and fluid relationships, into heavenly harmony, where the morning stars shall sing together and all the sons of God shall shout for joy. My brethren, racial alienations are tremendous, but the grace of the Lord is mightier still. He looks out on the sorrows of the race. He has mentioned guilt, he has mentioned sin, he has mentioned racial alienations, and now he looks out on the sorrows of the race stretching on every side like a bitter marsh, and then he testifies the grace of God which can transform the brackish waste and convert it into healthy soil in which innumerable graces will grow, even the fruits and flowers of the Spirit.

My brethren, I cannot even begin to try to tell you what the Apostle Paul says that grace can do for human woe. One could preach twenty sermons upon it. I will tell you one or two things he says, for there are sorrowing hearts in my congregation. He says that the grace of God brings to the sorrowing the spirit of endurance. And you remember how he sings it: "We are strengthened in the grace that is in the Lord Jesus." And he says that grace brings to the sorrowing soul the tender light of the dawn, for you remember that he says, "We have good hope through grace"? Nay, he even says that grace can go into the very heart of sorrow, and in the very heart of sorrow can unseal the springs of praise. Do you remember his beautiful phrase, "Singing with grace in your hearts unto the Lord"? And the singers are sufferers, they are in the night, theirs are songs of the midnight.

And so I have tried just in this passing way to show you how the Apostle Paul lays hold of these big things — guilt, sin, racial alienation, universal woe — and then just when these big things are fascinating and appalling us, he testifies the grace of God, and they are all reduced. The grace of God is bigger than the biggest thing you know, even your sin. It is bigger than our hunger, it is bigger than our want, bigger than all our wants. And, my brethren, do you wonder that a man of a faith like this, and of an experience like this, and a message like this, should be running everywhere up and down about the world, telling everybody the tidings of redeeming grace?

Well, now, that is how the early apostolic Church

faced the antagonisms of its own world. They felt their own personal emancipation. They felt the driving power of the constraining love of the Lord. They believed in the overflowing adequacy and sufficiency of redeeming grace. And when they met with obstacles they almost rejoiced in the obstacle. Almost? Altogether. For there is one apostle who shouts out, "My brethren, count it all joy when you come to a troublesome bit of road," because they knew that multiplication of the difficulties would only tend to manifest more gloriously the power of the grace of the Lord. "None of these things move me. I set no value upon my life as compared with the joy of finishing my course and the completing of the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

Now then, my brethren, how is it with the apostolic succession? How is it with the apostles' successors? How is it with the Church and the believers of our own day? We are living in fierce and turbulent times. All the floods are out, all the roads are broken up, all the venerable piles crumbling and falling. The lovely flowers of our gardens are being trampled in mud and slime. "Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars. Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." Whatever those words may mean, they are a wonderful description of the life of our day.

My brethren, how are we facing it? I ask, how are we facing it? I have been very feebly trying to show how one great Apostle faced the antagonisms of his day. How are we facing ours? Have we got sure foothold, or are we moving from our standing? Are we holding our lives dear unto ourselves, or are we gloriously able, in the deep eternal verities of personal experience, to claim the Apostle Paul as our beloved kinsman and brother in the faith? Have we had some stupendous personal experience in our lives as unchanging as the unchanging Matterhorn when the chalets are crumbling, and the flowers are withering in the vale? Have we been apprehended by Christ Jesus, and do we feel His grip upon us now? Do we feel the crowding constraints of His redeeming grace? If we do, then, believe me, we can never be daunted, even though the world is filled with the most awful change. "Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved, and though the mountains be shaken in the heart of the sea."

Why should we fear and why should we be daunted, my brethren? I will confess to you quite frankly that I think the Church of the living God ought to sound a more optimistic note. We have the unsearchable riches of the grace of God. We have the same grace with which the Apostle Paul confronted Corinth and Ephesus, and in the power of that grace we can meet the needs of London and New York and Calcutta and Pekin. And that grace is all-sufficient, and it is our privilege to carry the message and exemplify its power.

Just look abroad on our homeland. Huge needs

confront us, and what huge variety of hungers are round about us. There are thousands of men and women in Britain to-day who have lost their spiritual bearings in the appalling happenings of the last two years. A dense fog has fallen upon them. It has gathered around their feet. The outlook has been blotted out. The inviting road is lost, and they are stumbling on like travellers who have been overtaken by the night. It is the ministry of the Church of God to testify to these staggering souls the grace of the Lord.

On the other hand, I do believe that there are tens of thousands of people who are just beginning to find their spiritual bearings because of the happenings of the last two years. Three years ago they lived in a world that was little bigger than a cave. Their horizon was built of material walls, and their world was constituted of material interests and transient ambitions and carnal delights. And now the walls are cracking, and under the shattering blows of sorrow and tragedy and calamity they are having their first starry glimpses of a nobler and a larger world, and it is our unutterable privilege to testify to these waiting souls the gospel of the grace of God.

And then round about us in the homeland, round about is in many a land, there are souls who are crushed under the oppressive weight of sorrow and bereavement, and their wounds will not be stanched. My brethren, what is there for people like this but Jesus, and what is there for them except the gentle ministry of His most healing grace?

" He makes the wounded spirit whole,
He calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary rest."

I look further afield on our own land, upon the towering needs of our day, and I see the most serious task of lifting up and re-establishing our fallen and shattered ideals. It will not be an easy thing when the war is over to rebuild throughout Europe our broken homes. It will not be an easy thing to restore our ruined churches. But it will be an infinitely more difficult thing to recover our lost ideals, to reconstitute our conception of the undivided body of the Holy Catholic Church, to restore again to the minds of men the vision of human brotherhood and of righteous goodwill and of Divine and fruitful peace, and to erect again in the purposes of men the sacred possibilities in Christ Jesus of liberty and equality and fraternity. My brethren, I think the most stupendous task that lies before us is the re-equipment and the refurnishing of the mind with our lost ideals; but in God's holy grace, and in Christ who brought both grace and truth, the seemingly impossible thing can be accomplished.

And, then, there are all those industrial and social problems, so immense and so manifold, which even now are clamouring in our streets, and before we know where we are they will be literally hammering at our doors. And, then, behind and beneath all the tasks and necessities that I have named — I was going to say the common groundwork of them all, in which probably all of them are rooted — is our modern sin, spreading like our soil throughout

the world, the bed and ground-rock of all our deepest woes.

In the face of all these things, are we daunted? Are the soldiers of Jesus afraid? Why should the Church of God flinch? The immensity of our task is also the index of our resources, and our antagonisms are only the measure of our opportunity. Still, my brethren, where sin abounds, grace doth much more abound. Everywhere the people are calling for the full satisfaction of redeeming grace. I think, perhaps, that one of the benefits of living in two countries, as it is my lot at present to do, is that you can see more of the field in which the grace of God is working. And everywhere I go across that land, which is in danger of an exceedingly deadly materialism — and never more deadly than in the hour of this colossal war — I find that people are calling for the satisfaction of redeeming grace. They are calling in their hunger and deprivation, they are calling in their emptiness and unrest, they are calling in their shallow sleep, they are calling in their awaking. Everywhere in lands afar the sons of men are opening their eyes. What shall they see? Four hundred millions in China are opening their eyes. Upon what shall they look? I know that Confucianism is hanging out new banners, but she has lost her spiritual control; and those who know China best say that the Chinese mind is emptying — who is going to fill it? The cultured student in India is out and about on the open road in quest for the satisfaction of grace, and fifty millions of outcasts are pleading for the bread of life and peace. In Africa, Mohammedanism is marching faster than

Christianity. My brethren, how is it? Has Mohammedanism more urgency in her message? has she greater treasure in her dowry? Mohammedanism has no big vision, she has no large standing, she has no specific for sin, she has no secret of healthy progress. Everywhere the African is calling for the satisfactions of grace. And even here to-day I hear them calling — my God, I would like to hear them far more poignantly than I do — I hear them calling from lands where the love of Jesus has never yet been known. I hear them calling from immense regions of Mongolia, from the secret fastnesses of Tibet, from the mountains of Afghanistan, from Bokhara, from the almost immeasurable stretches of Africa, where the voice of him that bringeth good tidings has never yet been heard.

Everywhere the world is calling. She is calling in her delusions. She is calling in her unsatisfied cravings and desires. She is calling in her weariness and sin. How fares it with the Church of God? Is she ready? Are her feet shod with the readiness of the gospel of peace? Has she moved only in reluctance and timidity and fear? or is she bravely responsive to the thrilling call? Is she staggering in doubt and unbelief? or is she leaping forward in the glorious inspirations of her quenchless hope?

My brethren, let this be my closing word. Think about it. Jesus lives! His grace is still abounding! His grace is all-sufficient! We are by no means the first people to face the difficult road, and the children of faith have always been the most justified in their most audacious ventures. "O thou that bringest

good tidings, get thee up to the high mountains. O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength, lift it up, be not afraid. Say unto the peoples, Behold your God." "My grace is sufficient for thee." Amen.

THE CONDITIONS OF VICTORY

By A. F. Winnington-Ingram, D.D., Bishop of London

"Till the day dawn, and the shadows flee away." — *Song of Sol.* ii. 17.

There are two views possible to-day of the spirit in which we should enter upon the New Year (1916).

In the first view the year opens with nothing but clouds and thick darkness. Not only is the night of war still upon us, but there is not even a streak of dawn. There has been no such crime for a thousand years as the slow and deliberate extermination of the Armenian race, and the misery of the Serbian refugees is beyond description. We ourselves have made mistakes in policy and strategy. (This is the view of the pessimist which I am describing.) We would not believe that war was coming; and when it did come, so little were we prepared that we were turning out one shell a day to the hundred of the enemy. Our best and brightest boys are dead. One father was seen in a railway carriage in tears — which he could not control. At first no notice was taken by the passengers, but at last a kindly fellow passenger asked him very softly the cause of his grief. "I am very sorry," he said, "to give way, but my five fine boys are killed, and I have just left my wife, as a consequence, in a lunatic asylum." As in the days of the last plague in Egypt, there is

scarcely a house in which there is not one dead. Christ is betrayed again, and no hand is uplifted to save Him. Judas is again out on his fell errand, and now, as before, it is night.

No one can deny that this view of the extreme pessimist has something to say for itself. Few things are less helpful to-day than unthinking optimism. As a merely short view of the situation it is unanswerable.

But on Sunday morning in St. Paul's Cathedral we have no right to take short views. We meet under a great dome which speaks of eternity, of the magnificence, and the patience of God. We are worshipping in the Mother Church of an Empire whose "flag has braved a thousand years the battle and the breeze." We have no right to be content to be less hardy, less brave and less determined than our forefathers; and still less have we the right to dishonour the cross which gleams at the top of this cathedral, the cross round which the martyrs died.

And when we peer into the New Year from the vantage ground of St. Paul's Cathedral the outlook becomes a very different one. The facts recounted by the pessimist need not be, and in many cases cannot be, denied; but there is one important Person left out of sight in the whole purview of the situation — and that is God Himself! God Himself in His unconquerable strength and in His dazzling splendour; God by whom all things were made in heaven and in earth — marvellous in His power, far-reaching in His judgment, but most wonderful of all in His humility; God who speaks to us from the manger at Christmas, and from the cross on

Good Friday, but whose restrained majesty only bursts forth in full splendour upon Easter Day.

It is God who makes all the difference. What does God think about it all? — that is the only question worth asking on the first Sunday of the New Year. God has no favourites. He is not the special God of the British Empire any more than He is of the German. He is the God of all the earth. No individual can escape His eye and no nation His judgment. His rules for the governance of the world are well known, and, up to a point, have been fully revealed; and, when we understand, a flood of new light is poured upon the future.

In the first place, it is part of His education of the world that He never lets a nation or individual off the consequences of their mistakes or does their work for them. To do so would be to treat them as slaves, and not children; as puppets, and not men. The moment we understand this, the idea that we are under the ban of God, because we have not yet won the great war, is nothing short of absurd.

Our youth was not trained to serve — in spite of the repeating warnings of the last great soldier we buried in this cathedral; therefore we had to train them after the war had begun. The Navy was trained, alert, efficient, ready; therefore it rules the sea. It is exactly in accordance with the first law of God's governance of the world. If there has been a miracle worked at all it has been the escape of a worse disaster than we have ever yet had. As far as our own country is concerned, the really astonishing thing has been the raising of over three million men in eighteen months by voluntary en-

listment. The revelation has been the outpouring of service both of men and of women from the heart of a nation which its enemies thought was lost in comfort and wrapped in ignoble ease.

Nothing has happened in the main which must not have happened when an unprepared nation, in however good a cause, met one which has prepared for the same struggle for forty years. What has happened is exactly what we should expect. The inevitable has happened; and it is not part of God's plan in governing the world to stop the inevitable.

But if that was all it would indeed be only negative comfort. The positive comfort is this — on one condition of which we will speak in a moment — God has never allowed devilry, lust, and tyranny finally to triumph in His world. Heaviness may endure for a night — and often the night is very long — but joy cometh in the morning.

"The slow hours of darkness drag on their leaden way,
But day dawns at last and the shadows flee away."

What is the one condition? That the nations which are to be the instruments of God's judgments are worthy to be weapons in His hands. That is why we have these days of penitence and prayer. As God reaches down His hand to His quiver to find the weapon for the bow which He has made ready, He must find a weapon which He can use. Are we, as a nation, such a weapon? That is the question for us to-day. There is a fine description of the ready weapon in a chapter of the prophet Isaiah: "He has made me like a polished shaft; in His quiver has He hidden me." Are we such a polished

shaft? "He has prepared for Himself the instrument of death, He has bent His bow and made it ready." But what if we break in His hands! What if He cannot send us, in the crisis of His great Day, straight to the goal! Have we nothing to repent of? Are we in a position to say: "We thank Thee, O God, that we are not as other nations are"? What about our national Drink Bill? What about the moral state of our streets in darkened London? Worse than it has been for twenty years. What lies at the root of this eternal dispute between Capital and Labour?

No, the truth of the matter is this. If the one Day is to dawn, another must dawn too. The Day of Victory, if it is to come, is part of a larger Day. Our sons would have died in vain if the war was over and we went back to our old life again. We are apt to forget that before the great war began we were on the verge of civil war at home, and of an industrial revolution which some men thought would have been on a scale unknown in our history. A boy, one of five sons serving his country, wrote home to his mother after a terrible time in Gallipoli: "I think God is waiting for England to learn many things before the war will end, and she is so very, very slow in learning. Once she does, and realises her duties to the world as well as to herself, then, and then only, do I think peace will come."

It is to help the nation to learn these things, and so shorten the time that the Church is to undertake a national mission to the nation; and it is to gird ourselves for this great task and to prepare ourselves spiritually to accomplish it, to which she will devote the great proportion of the coming year.

But there is one set of people to whom the thought of God changes the outlook more than any other, and that is the mourners of the world. If their boys are really dead, and dead for ever, then there is nothing to relieve the darkness of the night. But if God is God, then we can trust them to Him to have a glorious, full, and interesting life before them beyond the grave.

> "As they come trooping from the war,
> Our skies have many a new-gold star."

As one by one on the battlefield or in the hospital the light of their earthly life fades from their dear faces, it only seems to us that upon each of them the day is really breaking whilst the shadows flee away. As Archbishop Laud said in his last prayer before his execution: "What is death but a little mist, a little vapour? Lord, I am coming as fast as I can."

It requires, then, no foolish ignoring of plain facts to enter upon the New Year in a hopeful spirit; it requires only faith in God, faith in God which first produces penitence, then inspires action, then draws out sacrifice, and then breathes fortitude into the soul.

In such a faith let the nation rise from its knees after these days of penitence and prayer, and with head erect pass on to the mighty task which lies close to its hand in the coming year. God is, God sees, God loves, God knows, and right is right, and right is might.

In the full ripeness of His time we shall see the plan sublime of His beneficent intent. Live on in hope, press on in faith. Love conquers all things — even death.

THE CHRISTIAN EMPRISE

A. Campbell Morgan, D.D.

"He must reign, till He hath put all His enemies under His feet." — 1 *Cor.* xv. 25.

If, in any measure Christ is failing to appeal to the highest in human nature and experience to-day, it is because His call has been interpreted latterly in terms of unwarranted softness and ease. The measure in which this is so, is that of the responsibility of the Church to express in life and by lip the heroic notes of His appeal.

If we have expressed His call in terms of softness and ease it is because we have lost sight in some degree of the greatness of His emprise. Whether for good or evil, men are interested to-day in big things. In every way the outlook of man is more extensive than it was. The universe is bigger than it was two generations ago. That is to say, men know its bigness better than they did. Where men thought parochially they are now thinking nationally. Where they thought of a nation they are thinking of a Commonwealth. Where they thought of a world they are thinking of a universe. Where they thought materially they are thinking spiritually. I repeat that all this is so, whether for good or for evil. In view of this, it is a serious question as to whether the Church of God has kept pace with human develop-

ment in her grasp upon the extensive glory of her enterprise, and the consequent demand upon her members for heroic service.

We have talked very much about denominational loyalty. Has this in itself tended to decrease our passion for the glory of the one Name? We have continued with more or less devotion our evangelistic effort for the saving of men. Have we realised our mission to humanity? We have sought to appropriate the comforts of our faith. Have we realised our comradeship with that faith in its grapple with the lies, philosophic and economic, which hinder the coming of the kingdom? In other words, are we thinking meanly or majestically of Christianity? All this I deliberately state interrogatively. The fear of my soul is expressed in the form of questions.

It goes without saying that I am not suggesting that Christianity must be enlarged in order to cope with the enlarged human outlook. The universe is no bigger than it was. The change is in man's understanding of it. So with Christianity. It cannot be enlarged. It is rooted in God, and in its mission, in some form, it embraces the universe. What we do need is an enlarged appreciation of its vastness. All this introduction reveals the reason why I have selected this text: "He must reign, till He hath put all things under His feet."

The text occurs in the midst of a passage, than which there is nothing more supremely and stupendously wonderful in the Bible. At this point, Paul the theologian, the dialectician, the protagonist, climbed to a poetic height which no other seer, Old Testament or New, ever reached. Here he saw far

out beyond the things which had been revealed to the rugged and splendid prophets of the Hebrew economy. Here he saw glories that lie beyond anything that John ever looked upon. John saw the blood and fire and vapour of smoke, and, emerging beyond it, a thousand years when evil will be held in check but not eliminated. Beyond even that he saw the loosing of evil, for its destruction; and beyond that, the infinite glory of an earthly kingdom wherein righteousness will dwell. He saw no further. Paul's vision goes beyond that, to a consummation so great and grand and glorious that he can only describe it by employing human language which perplexes the mind. He saw an end in which the glorious Son will hand over the kingdom to God, that God may be all and in all. Now, if we can grasp the significance of the declaration of our text as interpreted by that whole passage, it will be impossible for us to think meanly of Christianity; and we shall at least begin to apprehend the heroic nature of the demands made upon the followers of the Christ.

Therefore I propose now to do none other than endeavour to lead your thoughts in a meditation on this passage. Our theme is that of the Christian Emprise. This we shall attempt to understand by considering the statement of our text in the light of its context. The theme is that of the reign of Christ; its cause, its course, and its consummation; but we will take these things in another order; speaking first of the reign of Christ as to its cause; secondly, of the reign of Christ as to its consummation; so that there may remain upon our hearts at the close

of our meditation that which is of supreme importance to us, the reign of Christ as to its course.

In dealing with the reign of Christ as to its cause, let me ask you to note most carefully that it is as Christ that He reigns. The pronouns of the text must be linked with the title which the Apostle employed throughout the whole of this section of the letter dealing with the subject of the Resurrection. It is Christ who must reign. He is the Messiah, and the Messiah is the King-Priest. The reign of Christ is redemptive, in order to renewal, and in order to restoration. There is a distinction which it is well for us to make, not for the present study only, but in all our thinking, the distinction between the Kingdom of God, and the Kingdom of the Son of His love. When we speak of "the Kingdom of God" we speak of the fundamental fact of His kingship, and of that kingship exercised. When we speak of "the Kingdom of the Son" we think of that within the Kingdom of God which needed redemption, and which the Son redeems. The Kingdom of the Son is always the redeemed Kingdom. It is in that sense that the Apostle declares that He must reign till He hath put all His enemies under His feet.

This at once suggests the whole dark background, the nature of which may be expressed in two of the most familiar words of our religious thinking, Sin and Death. Sin is the revolt of the highest factor in that creation of which man is the centre, the revolt of the will against the government of God. Death, resulting in human experience from human sin, is the ultimate disaster, as Paul says here, "the last

enemy." It is an enemy, and never anything else than an enemy; it is a foe to everything that is natural, in the deepest sense of the word, in human need and human life; the ultimate enemy, the last enemy. Christ reigns in order to put an end to sin, and in order to put an end to death. In order to deal with these things He was crowned King. The crown that rests upon the brow of Christ is the mitre of His Priesthood. "He was crowned with glory and honour that He might taste death for every man." Observe the real significance of that declaration. It is not that He was crowned because He tasted death for every man. His crown was not a reward given to Him for dying. He was crowned, He was made King, in order to grapple with sin and with death, and master them. Men in mockery, cruelty, and brutality, gave Him a crown of thorns; but by the passion of His heart, and the purpose of His will, and the power of His love, He transfigured the crown of thorns, so that it is indeed the diadem of His redemptive empire. The Kingdom of the Son is the redeemed Kingdom. He must reign as Christ, till He hath put all His enemies under His feet.

In the second place, let us consider what the Apostle teaches here concerning the consummation of the reign. We start by reminding ourselves that Paul distinctly affirms here that His reign will end, that He will not always reign, in the sense in which He is reigning now. "Then cometh the end, when the Son shall deliver up the Kingdom to the Father." "He must reign, till He hath put all His enemies under His feet." The declaration is not that when He has subdued His enemies He will begin to reign.

Then He will finish reigning. The Kingdom of the Son is a limited Kingdom. What then, is to be its consummation? How will it end? The text gives the answer inclusively: "He must reign *till* He hath put all enemies under His feet." In an earlier declaration this is stated more in detail. The Kingdom of the Son will end with the abolition of all destructive forces; the Kingdom of the Son will end with the cession of the redeemed Kingdom to God; the Kingdom of the Son will end with the subjecting of the Son Himself to the kingship of God. The consummation of the reign of Christ will consist in the abolition of all destructive forces.

In this connection Paul has given us a careful description of the whole organised empire of evil. Whereas there are passages in our New Testament, and in these writings of Paul, which are full of rhetorical beauty, none of them is mere rhetoric. When Paul wrote that He shall abolish all rule and all authority and power, he was not employing the method of the mere rhetorician. This was the language of the careful teacher. In that brief description, he has given us a picture of the whole organised empire of evil. Whatever our modern thinking may be, these New Testament writers had a very clear conception of the empire of evil as a very highly organised empire. None of these early writers of the Christian Church were inclined to think of the spiritual foes by which the Church is confronted, as any other than highly organised, and highly intelligent. These men saw the dark underworld of evil clearly. Paul lived amid the most appalling conditions of human government and rule.

We have only to think of him at the great centres, and then to remember what those centres were, to see what Paul was looking at as he wrote. Think of Rome, and of Athens! They were centres and hotbeds of such unnameable corruptions as are not to be matched to-day in any city in the world. These men saw these things with clear eyes; but they never accounted for the things which they saw, by the things which were to be seen. They saw, behind the material manifestations, the dark spiritual forces. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood." They saw flesh and blood, corrupt, voluptuous, bestial, ruined. But said the Apostle, we do not wrestle with flesh and blood; we have to deal with the dark and sinister system of evil that lies at the back of this material corruption; with the principalities and the powers, under the inspiration and the domination of which, these evil things of the flesh result. That was the apostolic outlook, and here Paul gives us a most accurate description of the whole organised empire of evil in the words: rule, authority, power. This is not a case of using three words where one would suffice. The three are necessary, if we are to see the condition. Let us take them in order. The word *Rule* has reference to the central mind and will and hate, governing all. To Paul this was not an abstract idea merely. He was not foolish enough to imagine that thought can be operative in the universe without personality. He, and all New Testament writers, understood that a conception postulates a personality. When Paul referred to Rule, he was thinking of the central intelligence, mind, will, hate.

The word *Authority* describes those to whom is committed the executive application of the Rule; the higher command; those who carry out the purposes of the central mind, will, and hate, in the spiritual world.

The word *Power* covers the whole of the rank and file which constitute the means by which that authority is executed.

Rule! Authority! Power! In these words the sinister organisation of the underworld of evil is in view, both in the spiritual and material realms. Paul says that He must reign as King until He have abolished all these evil things.

In the text we have an inclusive description in the phrase, "His enemies." His enemies are the enemies of humanity. Whatever bruises the fair face of a little child is His enemy. I name the child because Christ put the child by His side at the centre of humanity. We may describe the concentric circles round the child, and know that whatever hurts humanity is His enemy. Christ will reign till all such are under His feet.

In order to be final and superlative, after having been careful and inclusive, Paul says, "The last enemy that shall be abolished is death."

Thus the consummation of the reign of the Priest-King will be that of the abolition of all the forces of evil; the subjugation of the enemies of humanity which are the enemies of the reigning Christ, beneath His feet; and finally, the abolition of the last enemy, death.

Then it was that Paul, in the midst of his argument concerning the Resurrection, having said so much,

climbed to this great height, and had his prophetic vision of that hour in which there shall be on the part of the reigning Christ the cession of the redeemed Kingdom to God, even the Father. This is one of those places at which the expositor must stand aside, knowing that the final exposition can only be given under sanctified imagination to spiritually taught souls. Such will follow the Apostle to the great height, and see him peering through the mists to the final unveiling of the ultimate glory. What was it that he really saw? All this kingdom, in the midst of which you and I are living, with its wounds, and its weariness, and its wickedness, ransomed, redeemed, renewed by the King-Priest. Then he saw the Son hand over that ransomed Kingdom to God, the Eternal Ruler, even the Father, the Eternal Lover. In that hour of high and glorious victory God will rest in His righteousness, and He will rest in His grace. That is the consummation. Till then Christ must reign.

Then follows the mystic declaration that even the Son shall be subjected. The Son, in His identification with humanity in humanity's sin, and in His victory over humanity's sin, has brought humanity into an identification with Himself which can never end. The eternal union of the Son with the redeemed creation means the subjecting of the Son with that creation to the ultimate government of God. In relation with this statement of Paul we remember a phrase of Peter in which he refers to the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. These two conceptions are not contradictory, but complementary. The Son is for ever identified with

His ransomed creation in union with it, and so is an eternal King. Yet He will hand over that Kingdom, together with Himself as Head of it, to God Himself.

In conclusion, we come to that which is really the central thought, the course of the reign of Christ. He is reigning now. It is, in some senses true, but it is not finally accurate to say that He is the rejected King, and that therefore He is not reigning. He is the rejected King, but He is reigning as Priest, as Redeemer. He is conducting now the affairs of the redemption and ransoming of men. What, then, is the nature of His reign? This word of Paul is part of his discussion of the subject of Resurrection. It is as the Risen One that Christ reigns. He who was dead is alive for evermore, and holds the keys. His holding of the keys resulted from His resurrection from among the dead. But resurrection involves death. Apart from death there is no such thing as resurrection. We cannot talk of resurrection save as that which follows death. One who has never died, cannot be spoken of as one who has risen. Therefore it is the Crucified who reigns; but the Crucified who is risen. Whenever we think of this reigning Christ, whether it is as in conflict with the sinister and dark background of sin and death, or as accomplishing the glorious consummation and completion of the purpose of His reigning — the ransoming of the ruined order, and its return to God — we must never forget that His reign is based upon these two great facts, of the Cross and the Resurrection. Not the Cross alone; and the Resurrection cannot be alone. The Cross consummated by the Resurrection is the course of His reign. Death and

Resurrection are the two elements of His redeeming reign. By these He regains the throne, and puts down all false rule. By these He sways the sceptre, and abolishes all contrary authority. By these He accomplishes results, and masters all opposing power. He is reigning in no other way. He is employing no other weapon. He is not seeking to reign as King by the use of material forces. No clash of earthly arms helps the coming of the ransomed kingdom. The reign of Christ is the reign of the Crucified, who, in the mystery of His own dying in one death grapple in the darkness 'twixt old systems and the Word, mastered the false mind and will and hate that ruled the empire of darkness. The reign of Christ is the reign of the Risen One, who in His resurrection from among the dead, regained the sceptre from those who were in authority. The reign of Christ is the reign of the ascended King-Priest, who has provided all the forces that are necessary for the remaking of humanity, and so defeated the powers which destroy. Thus He has regained the throne, and sways the sceptre, and accomplishes the results of His grace.

Paul took a wide outlook upon the whole process. First he looked at Christ Himself. Then he spanned a vast intervening period and looked at the resurrection of the saints. Then he seems to have spanned some other period, the length of which we cannot know, and saw the final events: Christ the first fruits; then they that are Christ's at His coming; then cometh the end.

How long is the period between Paul's first point of observation and his second? I do not know. I

know that at least the period between is 1917 years. Christ has not yet come. He is coming. When, I do not know. I pray God, swiftly; for in His coming is the real hope of the world. Then Paul looked on to the end. How long is there between the second look and the third? I have no idea. From my reading of my Bible at least a thousand years, and probably two or three. But then, however long or short the intervening period, then cometh the end when He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father.

Christ, the first fruits. He who descended into death to abolish death, lives again and giveth life to men. That is the first fact in the process of the reign. Then the long procession and continuity of these slowly passing centuries move up to the next occasion, and by the same way. Apostles, confessors, martyrs, faith witnesses, what are they all doing? They are sharing in the life that Christ bestowed, and they are sharing in the suffering of the Christ. And so the time approaches when He shall come, and they shall share His triumph. Then away out, somewhere beyond, cometh the end, when the kingdom is perfected and delivered up to the Father, when the infinite splendour of the Divine order is realised, when the cosmos shall flash, and shine in glory. That is the end, and that end will come by the way of death and resurrection, of defeat and victory, of travail and triumph.

That is the Christian emprise. Its purpose is vast, and its method demands the highest heroism. At the beginning we see the Christ Himself, the King. And what of His way? It was the way of suffering,

the way of power, the way of putting from Himself all the things to which He had in His humanity inherent right, but which He abandoned that He might die daily, until He died centrally, and so rose into newness of life. The vastness of the emprise created the heroism of the method.

Every Christian soul is committed to that emprise. That is the ultimate meaning of the radical and revolutionary conditions of entry to the Christian Church, and membership therein. Why so stern a message at the gate of the kingdom? Why so insistent the demands of the Lord upon His own after they enter? Because all His own are called upon to share His way, that they may share in His victory; because the business upon which they enter is big, God's great business. That creates the glory and the greatness of being a Christian.

To this conception the Church must return if she is to serve the Christ, and if she is to make any appeal to the highest in men. The Church trifling with a thousand and one little nothings! My masters, and my God, the tragedy of it! But the Church seeing the vastness of the enterprise, will see the necessity for the heroic in her attitude thereto.

In the light of all this, where do I stand? That is a question that every member of the Christian Church should be asking to-day. And upon the answers of Christian souls will depend the issue; as to whether the Church will be abandoned as an organisation, while God moves outside to do His work; or whether she will fall into line with the thorn-crowned, the glory-crowned Priest-King, and move forward with Him to the end.

MUST WARS CONTINUE UNTIL THE END?

By J. H. Rushbrooke, M.A.

"... and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." — *Isa.* ii. 4.

The bright expectation of this paragraph is found not only in the book of Isaiah, but in Micah, and in the self-same words. It was, perhaps, common to prophetic minds in that age.

When the fulfilment was to be looked for is not quite clear: "in the latter days," say both Isaiah and Micah. Certain it is that the immediate future of Jerusalem offered the sharpest contrast to the prophets' picture. The city had become corrupt; long years of security and prosperity had bred luxury, social oppression, contempt of God. When Isaiah gazes upon the life of his city and his people, he realises that this is not a centre from which the law of God may go forth; this actual Jerusalem cannot be the seat of a fellowship of peoples linked in a covenant of perpetual peace and righteousness: the radiant vision fades, and he speaks in far more sober tones. The prospect of world-wide blessing is lost; what awaits his nation is judgment, and "when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the

spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning (iv. 4), then, and then only, shall there be a blessing for the survivors, the small but purified remnant that has escaped. It did not surprise Isaiah that in his own time there was no apparent advance towards the ideal of his vision. Had he not known from the day of his call that his testimony would be unheeded? Whether men would bear or forbear, he must needs speak; nay, the tragedy of his lot was this, that he must speak, knowing that men would not hear. This picture of an era of peace and brotherhood stood in sharp contrast to the realities, and even to the tendencies, of his time, but he left it as a true God-given vision to find fulfilment in God's time and way.

The paragraph from which I have taken the text is among the most familiar of Biblical passages to many of us. The singular beauty of the vision has appealed to us, and its hope has stirred us. It focussed the expectation of our earlier years. We grew up in an atmosphere of zealous effort for peace, of increasingly intimate fellowship between men and women of different nations, of peace societies and Hague Conferences; the ideal of international friendship was ardently cherished, and these words were among the most familiar in our mouths. Moreover, as we gazed upon Jesus Christ, as we heard His teaching and suffered His Cross to bring its revelation of love, we were fortified in the conviction that "peace on earth, goodwill among men," must needs be sought by those who follow Him, and that apart from the establishment of international peace and goodwill, the triumph

of His Kingdom is necessarily imperfect. We did not so read the will of our Lord as to believe that any section of human life is exempt from His authority, nor did we hope so faintly in Him as to fear that He would finally fail to secure recognition in any. The Spirit of Jesus strengthened our faith in the ideal of the ancient prophet, and our vivid belief in the attainment of the ideal was part of our belief in His living presence.

I am compelled to admit that the rosier hopes and anticipations cherished by many of us have been shattered. It does not follow that the hopes were wrong or the ideals false. I am not prepared to accept the present war as expressing the will of God in any other sense than this: that the constitution of our world is God-given, and under it human sin and folly are allowed scope to reveal their true character and work out their results. This war was not inevitable; never was anything on earth less so — it could have been avoided, should have been avoided, and but for the fixed purpose of one great continental power it would have been avoided. So far from the occurrence of the war being a condemnation of our ideals of peace, everything associated with its origin and course has confirmed our conviction that war in itself is irrational, morally indefensible, barbarous.

We do not deny or question that splendid heroism and self-sacrifice are evolved in war; how could we question that when from our own families scores of the brightest and most promising of our brothers and our sons have voluntarily offered themselves? But we can no more defend war on the ground of

the heroism it evokes than we can defend arson on the ground of the brave rescue work that may be accomplished when there is a fire! "War is hell," said General Sherman fifty years ago, and he had seen no such war as ours. To-day we know that every description of horror drawn from the past is inadequate; science, devilishly misused, has made war between "civilised" nations more hideous than the worst struggles of "savages" race. Those who think that the views of Christian advocates of peace have been somehow discredited by this war should ask whether the death of a patient who never would follow his doctor's advice is a reflection on the doctor's wisdom! Assuredly, it is not the supporters of international friendship and the workers for it that have made this war. And so far from the war "refuting" them, it vindicates them. They told the truth as to its senselessness and repulsiveness; not the whole truth, for the reality is far worse than their description.

But it is possible that hopes may be worthy yet vain, and aspiration noble but impracticable. And, therefore, we raise the question: Must wars continue to the end of time? I propose to refer briefly to some of the difficulties that hinder men from giving a hopeful reply. There are three points on which I will speak: (1) an erroneous use of the Scriptures; (2) a pagan view of the State; (3) a sense of the enormous practical difficulties in abolishing war. (I have arranged them in an ascending order of value; the first is of little consequence; the second far more grave; the third calls forth our utmost effort of thought and service.)

Must Wars continue until the End?

(1) It has come to me as a surprise that in certain quarters among genuinely religious men the view is still held that it is almost impious to work for the establishment of lasting peace, because the outlook of the New Testament is upon an era of war without earthly limit. The authority of Jesus is pleaded on behalf of this gloomy expectation; special interpretations of the Apocalypse are adopted; various passages from the Epistles are cited. To meet the position fully would demand not a section of one sermon, but an entire series of sermons. We will only say in general terms that nothing can be more hopeless than the effort to get out of the language of Jewish Apocalypse, whether in the Gospels or elsewhere, definite pictures of human history and its lines of development. The people who undertake to deal with apocalyptic references as containing a body of predictions awaiting fulfilment land themselves in hopeless confusion. He who builds his vision of the future on the apocalyptic language of the New Testament (or the Old) builds on a foundation of shifting sand. The value of apocalyptic sayings is not that we take them as literal descriptions, but that we get back to the thought that is at the heart of the Jewish eschatological notions, that only with God are all things possible, that not by human power alone can great deliverances be achieved, but always by the real presence and activity of the Supernatural — of God.

I have recently met with an argument which, contesting the idea that war might some day vanish from the earth, points to the words of Jesus as to

wheat and tares growing together "until the harvest." Now, granting that the parable means that until the end there will be in the Kingdom of God a mixture of good and evil, it has not a word to say as to what particular forms of evil will persist. Why just war? Granting that some evils will be left, war appears precisely one of those that might be got rid of. It is a public evil, expressed in overt acts impossible to carry out without long preparation — a recognisable, subduable thing. The ills hardest to subdue are vices of the mind, sudden outbursts of passion, sins hidden from the public gaze, subtle forms of mischief that almost escape the notice of the sinner himself. We see no reason whatever for citing the authority of the New Testament, reasonably interpreted under the guidance of the Spirit of Christ, on behalf of the proposition that war must continue as long as time itself. Indeed, those who so cite it are likely in the future to be classed with the men who two or three generations ago defended slavery as Biblically justified!

(2) The second difficulty is found in a pagan view of the State. The traditional view of the State held by statesmen and diplomatists is appalling when viewed from the Christian standpoint. A State is regarded as possessing an absolute sovereignty; in effect it owes nothing either to God or man. Propositions which when laid down for an individual would be branded as unsound and morally detestable are laid down as a matter of course for the State. A recent writer* truly says: "It is the false, immoral doctrine, inimical to humanity, that a State

* J. A. Hobson, "Towards International Government," p. 180.

is an absolute morally self-contained being, living in the world with other similar beings, but owing no duties to them, and bound by no obligations that it may not break on the plea of necessity which is the fundamental vice embodied in that foreign policy the fruits of which we are now reaping."

You need not to be told why I call this a pagan doctrine. It is far below the level of the prophetic teaching of the Old Testament — to say nothing of the spirit of the New. It implies not a cosmos, an ordered universe in which the law of one God rules, but a chaos of conflicting claims for ever irreconcilable. But the entire theory is a legal, philosophical, metaphysical falsehood, the most disastrous piece of false thinking still surviving on earth. Nationality is something that has roots in Nature and history and spiritual experience. State sovereignty is rooted in the brains of lawyers, an abstraction that has no justification in the real relations of men. Germany, Russia, Britain are not three moral absolutes; and when established Christian Churches in any of these lands consent to become the slavish instruments of their Government, and to treat its authority as final, they forsake the one Lord of the whole earth. I do not hesitate to say that if States were in their nature such as the political theory of to-day assumes, they would be inhuman monstrosities, and the duty of every lover of his kind would be to end their useless and dangerous existence. There is no place in an ordered society for an Ishmael; and no ordered and stable civilisation is ever possible in a world consisting of States each of which avows itself a corporate Ishmael.

Closely related to this view of the State as an absolute end is the common mode of speech held by statesmen. The State is a "Power" — not a brotherhood, not an association for promoting the knowledge or happiness or well-being of its people or of the race, but something that possesses and exercises force. Put in what will seem a brutal form, but which is, alas! only too accurate, the respect which a State claims and receives is in proportion to its capacity to kill and destroy. Brothers, our thinking has got on false lines; we are the slaves of unexamined words — "State sovereignty," "Power," and so forth. Bring those words to the test of reason and of Christianity, and they will be seen to stand for intolerable ideas; and when once the false doctrine is discerned in its pagan simplicity, we shall be on the track of true thought. At present we are the slaves of inherited superstitions.

(3) We come to the last point to be considered to-night — the enormous practical difficulties in ridding the world of war. There are, as we have seen, false notions to be replaced by true; there are deep suspicions having their roots in long-standing historical relations; there are sinister interests that thrive on human strife; in a word, there is the terrible fact of human sin. They who labour for world peace, and hope that it will some day be attained, are frequently told that they take too lightly the fact of sin. On that point it is sufficient to say that when we remember that the ideal of our text charmed prophetic souls over two thousand five hundred years ago, and that to-day we have the most widespread and disastrous war ever waged,

so that we are occupied in beating our ploughshares into swords and our pruninghooks into spears — when we remember this we shall be warned against undue optimism.

But we must refuse to be frightened by talk concerning the vast power of sin. "Why are ye so fearful, O ye of little faith?" Are we to conclude that in very truth goodness is feebler than wickedness, and that, because the hindrances to be overcome are enormous, we are justified in abandoning an ideal which commends itself most clearly precisely when we are conscious of being nearest to our Master? Faith dares not reason so; it is still called on to remove mountains. It is true, as Lecky has said, that Christianity has been more successful in dealing with individuals than with communities, but "though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small." It suffices that God is with us; be victory speedy or delayed, it shall come.

It is terrible that after well-nigh two thousand years of Christianity we should be involved in a vast war. But is there no significance in the pathetic hope which all nations entertain, which even cynical statesmen find it necessary to encourage, that this may be the last? No military victory will ensure such a result; nothing will ensure it but a complete change of spirit and temper. God Himself is needed, and He alone is equal to the vast task. And we His servants will pray and testify and labour and strive to "prepare the way of the Lord."

SUPER-VICTORY

By W. H. Findaly, M.A.

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors." — *Rom.* viii. 37.

How these times challenge the Bible! And how, in these times, the Bible challenges us!

Scattered through the Book are great utterances that, if they may be taken at their face value, are the very message for to-day. But do they mean what they say? Are they rock-solid, built so that man or nation, or a whole desperate world, may stake life or death on every syllable of them? Or are they words of theory, of fancy, of ideal, that served to bring easy cheer for easy times, but must not be leaned on too hard? Are the Book's great threatenings bombs that do not explode? its great promises, slackers that fail us at a crisis? its great commands, words for the parade ground and not for the death-grapple? Thus is the Book challenged by To-day; from such a crucible as this it must come out either a discredited relic of antiquity, or vastly more potent and precious than before.

And the Bible, thus challenged, turns its challenge upon us. Have we really believed it — believed it up to the hilt? — so believed it that, with whatever staggering content life now loads its great words, our faith still walks erect? Easily did it serve the little needs, even what seemed the occasional big exigen-

cies, of life as it used to be. How trippingly, with what ready assent, we could read such passages as that which closes the eighth of Romans, and be "persuaded" (forsooth) of this and that, about such things as "tribulation and anguish," "height and depth," and "the love of God"; and our little meaning, in using these great words, was like a streamlet trickling in the bed of a great river! But life to-day is filling the Book with startling new applications and implications; is writing figures such as we never dreamt of on its blank cheques; is forcing us to discover just how far we do believe its promises and admit its claims, and to decide whether or not we will stake everything upon it! Thus are *we* challenged to-day; and out of this crucible *we* must come either detected and disheartened professors of a religion too great for our puny grasp, or enriched with new treasures of our inheritance and jubilant in the adequacy of our faith for all extremities.

This twofold challenge will be brought home to us, if we measure against these strange new times the familiar old phrase of our text: "*More than conquerors*" — how often, how glibly perhaps, we have read, quoted, sung the words; how easily we have accepted them as true, and have supposed we were experiencing them! But "amid all *these* things" — the things of to-day — to be not only conquerors, but "more than conquerors"; do we, does the Church, find it, I will not say easy, but even possible to share Paul's experience to-day? "More than conquerors" — why, it would mean that, instead of being crushed under the present situation or struggling desperately to hold up our heads in it, we

should be exultantly "on top" of it! Is that where the pulpit has been this past eighteen months? or the religious press? or the multitudinous war-pamphlets? Has that been the manner and spirit of ordinary Christian folk, as we have gone about the day's work of this tremendous day?

Yet the word stands. Two years ago we would all have championed it against questioning or qualification. "It is true to the last letter," we should have said; "true for all conceivable conditions — the glorious, inalienable privilege of those who know 'the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'" But to-day —? Even among the stalwarts of the faith, the leaders of the march, how many are there whose bearing and utterance and action keep step with this music? So relentlessly do these times demand reality from the Book! So relentlessly does the Book in these times demand reality from us!

But would Paul himself not lower his high trumpet-note, if he had to face the world that fronts us to-day? — not for an instant, not by a quarter-tone! Look soberly at Paul's life and times, and you will begin to surmise that trials harder than those that we are temporarily passing through were his accustomed lot for all his Christian years; and that the eruption of world-evil that is so appalling and abnormal to us was the normal state of the world he knew. But however that may be — and we can never very confidently weigh other people's experiences against our own — in penning the passage where our text stands, St. Paul had vividly before his vision a range of adversity and evil wider than the utmost horizon of our journeyings in life. Look at it:

tribulation, — anguish, — persecution, — famine, — nakedness, — peril, — sword, — " killed all the day long," — " sheep for the slaughter," — death or life,— angels of evil, lower or higher, — present things or things to come, — forces of nature, — height, depth,— any created thing whatsoever! Does that inventory not cover what is happening in the world to-day? It does — every pang, every threat, every mystery of it. Even if — though may God spare us it! — the tide of woe is not yet at the full, if the triumphs of evil, the ravages of pain and destruction, are to reach extremes beyond our present imagining, they will still be within the sweep of the Apostle's survey. And he gathers all he sees into a great heap, and mounts on top of it " more than conqueror "; from that altitude he waves to all the universe his banner of " the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Do you suggest that Paul, when he gets on to themes such as this, is prone to extravagant language? True it is that he pours out magnificent universals and superlatives in unfolding the grace and love of God — " able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think "; " having always all sufficiency in everything — abound unto every good work "; " my God shall fulfil every need of yours "; " in everything and in all things have I learned the secret — I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me "; " the transient feather-weight of our afflictions worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory "; " ALL things are yours — ALL are yours." Language could surely not go further. Must we then take a discount off these super-words? Shall we talk knowingly of " the personal equation "

of a high-strung, buoyant temperament, and reduce Paul's extravagances to "sober prose" for the use of ordinary people? Let St. Paul hear any such suggestion from you, and how his "God forbid!" will flash out at you! "Buoyant temperament," forsooth, to explain his great assertions and assumptions! Life as he lived it (see 2 Corinthians xi.) was calculated effectually to cure temperamental excesses and sober him into the experience-hardened exponent of "things as they are." Yet through it all and after it all, at any spark of "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" or "the love of God" he still kindles to a flame that soars out of sight. Far from admitting that his language in such passages as our text needs moderating, he would assure us that it fails not by excess, but by defect; that, piling words on towering words, he cannot compass even the minimum expression, even a bare, literal, matter-of-fact statement of "the riches of the glory" of what we have in Christ. Were he amongst us to-day, the love of God in Christ would still for him over-tower the swelling surges of our disorder and calamity, as some strong peak by the ocean stands high and sure above its wind-tossed waves.

Nor is it on Paul's confidence and Paul's experience only, or mainly, that this great challenge to us stands. It stands on the great FACT which Paul preached and which we profess to believe. Look steadily at "Christ Jesus our Lord"; take the measure — even with our child's measuring-rod — of "the love of God," unfold the map of "the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," and you will confess that such utterances as our text, so far from being

fanciful, idealistic exaggerations, are the strictly logical corollaries, the necessary literal, actual inferences from those overwhelming facts. "More than conquerors," "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think," "always all sufficiency in everything" — these phrases are soberly precise; they err only by under-statement, because human speech has not the vocabulary to utter the full tale of what Redemption has won for us, not only in the life to come, but even in that which now is. Brethren, by a passage such as this, at such a time as this, we judge not only St. Paul, but ourselves. To dismiss Paul's language as not designed for days like our own — perhaps not for any days — would be to confess that the wonder of the Gospel has not yet dawned on our life. To read his words, as perhaps most of us here do, with a wistful sense that they do not indeed go beyond the terms of our inheritance in Christ Jesus, but that for such ordinary poor creatures as we are the attainment of them is an impossibility, this is to show that though our eyes have begun to be opened to the wonders of the Gospel, we are still like the blind man whose cure was half wrought. If we cannot honestly subscribe to the Apostle's declaration, this means that we are not living up to the every-day, every-soul rights and privileges of our redemption; we are "coming short of the glory of God." Let us look more closely then at St. Paul's experience, in terms of the times through which God is appointing us to pass, if perchance we may thereby help one another to apprehend that for which we have been apprehended by Christ Jesus.

Note first that the text speaks in the *present* tense. Its word is not one of assurance as to the future, but of actualised experience. Some among us feel as if, in our great extremity, faith achieves its utmost when it enables us to cling to the hope of the final, however distant, triumph of good; if, distraught, oppressed, overwhelmed, all but destroyed in the present, we can still find confidence to say: "Nevertheless, God is on the throne; and when all these calamities are overpast, we shall yet praise Him in the triumph of His Kingdom." The Gospel means much more than that to Paul. What he says, and claims our fellowship in saying, is: "*Amid* all these things — in their very onset, at their very worst — I am unsubdued, unscathed, erect, victor, — more than victor!" It is not in the brighter times ahead of us that the world needs the witness of our triumph. To be victors in the very hour of crisis, in this "hour and power of darkness" — that is the miracle which will worthily declare the might and the grace of "Him that loved us."

To be present victors "amid all these things," — what does it mean? It means that in us, while so many minor things are changed or gone, Faith, Hope, and Love even "NOW abide," though all three have been assailed as never before since Calvary. It means that, though the interests of outward life were never so lawfully, so *religiously*, pressing as they are to-day, the inner, spiritual life, our concern for the Kingdom of God, shall not be dethroned from its primacy in us. It means, therefore, that in these dark days Christian folk shall be found possessing their souls in serene and secure fearlessness, and that

the nation shall not look in vain to the Church for inspiration and leadership and cheer.

To be victors — to be present victors — our text challenges us; and yet further, to be *more than victors*. How are we to understand this? Let the current utterances of the newspapers and the statesmen expound it to us. The flesh-and-blood warfare to-day is full (there is one of its minor, yet considerable, compensations) of analogies and pointers for the concurrent and greatly more momentous spiritual conflict. And concerning the flesh-and-blood warfare, one of the things our leaders most insistently tell us is that we must resolve to be more than conquerors. Defeat, bare victory, overwhelming victory: those are the three alternatives before us. Defeat, they tell us, would mean an utterly intolerable future. A bare victory, a drawn struggle, would leave the world so shadowed by impending renewal of the conflict that life would be monstrously burdened and spoilt, — the stress of war prolonged under the name of peace. But an overwhelming victory, such as, they assure us, is within the reach of courage and determination and sacrifice, — that, they bid us hope, will not only write a real Finis to this dreadful chapter of human history, but will open wide, undreamt-of possibilities of good to the world, such as may make us count the great price well paid, will usher in a glorious new era of freedom and true peace, of brotherhood and high, worthy living.

Whether we accept or not this account of the prospects which offer on the material plane, it is a true exposition of the spiritual situation. To be defeated, to be barely conquerors, to be more than

conquerors, are the three possibilities of the Christian situation. If in this terrific spiritual trial we — individuals of us, groups of us, Churches of us — suffer defeat; if our faith be overthrown, if we get adrift on tides of passion, if we yield to the insistence of the surface things and let religion take second place; if, in a word, the close of the war finds us with a weaker hold upon God, a more tepid devotion to Christ, then the religious outlook will indeed be mournful. It seems excusable, do you think, to be worsted in so stern a fight? — nay, in God's warfare (according to the strange law concerning "him that hath" and "him that hath not"), the harder the fight, the heavier are the penalties of defeat; and if, under these winds and floods, "the house" of our religion falls, "great will be the fall thereof." But supposing we escape defeat, yet only just escape: suppose — and this is as much as the faith and courage of many among us dare anticipate — our religion just manages to survive the strain and stands erect again when the fury is spent: suppose that in the spiritual sphere the issues of this time of trial should be a drawn battle, leaving the armaments of unbelief and materialism and selfishness still mighty and threatening. We should in this case be victors, it is true; but with what a weariful prospect! alive and free, but doomed, after all the pain and cost, to take up again the old pre-war tasks and to strive, with such heart and hope as we might, toward a far distant triumph. But conceive now that, instead of defeat and instead of bare victory, we win, as by the grace of God we may, an overwhelming victory: conceive that in our conflict with "the spiritual hosts

of wickedness " we come off " more than conquerors," — and, as in the flesh-and-blood warfare, faith and courage, determination and sacrifice, will achieve this — what then? Why, then we shall emerge from our tribulation into a new world; we shall find our pre-war longings and prayers more than fulfilled, and the Kingdom more advanced by this unforeseen dispensation of conflict than it could have been by all our old strivings and contrivings; a glorious new era of achievement and opportunity will open before us. " You *may* be more than conquerors," cries St. Paul; " you *must* be more than conquerors," echoes every admonishing, challenging, inspiring voice of the situation.

What does it mean, this " super-victory "? It means that we come out of the trial not only not losers, but great gainers. To hold the field is victory, super-victory finds great spoil; not to be consumed in the fire is victory, super-victory is to come out refined gold. That Faith, Hope, and Love should survive in us is victory; it is super-victory that our Faith should issue more stalwart from the conflict, our Hope of stronger wing, of wider, loftier flight, our Love, taught by the challenge of Hate, purified, expanded, raised to a higher throne to wield completer sway. Super-victory knows that, as sure as God is God, the blackest clouds are " big with mercy," and finds means to wrest from them their blessings. It means that, even while the trial is upon us, the forces of evil are suffering manifold loss, and we are making rich new discovery of resources hidden in Christ; so that in the new era we shall face a defeated and weakened foe with a great new wealth

of energy and courage and skill, won in the fierce conflict God has counted us worthy to wage. Adam and Eve, in Blanco White's sonnet, find that, when sunset comes on their first day in Paradise, the dreadful loss, as they deem it, means glorious enrichment by revelation of the universe of stars, only to be discovered through darkness. To be " more than conquerors " means to come out of our time of darkness with a great expansion both of our knowledge and of our grasp of the " all things " that are ours, since "we are Christ's and Christ is God's."

That we may not, however, lose ourselves in universals — for " all things " has often meant practically " nothing " — let us look particularly at three of the things that super-victory in our present trial implies. They shall be three to which St. Paul's letters distinctly point us.

I

First: to be more than conquerors means achieving, even in such a time as this, *the Christian duty of Joy*. In our present tribulations endurance may be reckoned victory. To endure in submission, unmurmuring, without losing faith in the goodness and power of God, without doubting the ultimate issue — this might seem a hard and creditable victory. But the New Testament claims from us a higher achievement still. Its explicit, repeated word, in face of whatever life may bring, is: " Rejoice! " " Rejoice alway! " " Again I say, Rejoice! " It is not St. Paul alone, but with him St. Peter, St. James, and above all their Lord and ours, who insist that

life's worst pains and sorrows shall not kill, but feed our joy. To front to-day's world with a face not merely of patience, not merely of unshaken confidence, of dauntless hope, but positively *of joy*— what a super-victory is there!

"Meet suffering with contempt," says the Stoic. "Meet suffering with philosophic endurance," says the Hindu. "Meet suffering with trust and hope," says the Old Testament. "Meet and conquer suffering by Joy," says the New Testament. The war has thrown many religious people back upon the Old Testament — largely, I believe, through a mistaken hesitation about associating Christ with any war; and they are in danger of contenting themselves with Old Testament ideals and Old Testament consolations. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" — that is the Old Testament strain: endurance of present suffering, in sure confidence that it will pass and that for God's people the future, though it may be a far-distant future, is bright with joy and glory. Habakkuk (as in other famous words of his) is of the New Testament, not the Old, when he proclaims:

> "Though the fig-tree shall not blossom . . .
> And there shall be no herd in the stalls,
> YET I WILL REJOICE IN THE LORD."

Mostly the Old Testament is content to require from us in presence of life's sufferings submission, endurance, trust, and hope; it promises a night tearful, joyless, but joy waiting with the morning light.

But when the New Testament opens, a great new note is sounded. "Good tidings of GREAT JOY" are

abroad, and life in all its pulses must acknowledge the thrill. The writer to the Hebrews tells graphically of Old Testament worthies who "*endured* as seeing Him who is invisible"; but of his own persecuted contemporaries he can say: "Ye took *joyfully* the spoiling of your possessions." "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad," said the Master; and the New Testament Church, distressed, scattered, persecuted, poverty-stricken, pressed upon by a world of monstrous evil, yet sings along its way in unconquerable joy. Brethren, this is still the Order of the Day. In presence of all the evil that saddens and appals, amid the anguish of all the sorrow, our own and others', still there rings out the New Testament challenge, made living by the New Testament experience.

Christian joy, mark, does not hold its own by closing the heart against the sorrows. It is not a callous luxuriating in the treasures we enjoy, with the door shut against the stricken world about us. That was not Paul's mode of "rejoicing in tribulation." Who more tender-hearted than he, more sensitive to every grief and every wrong of the world about him? "*Sorrowful*, yet alway rejoicing," — that was the life he lived; "I overflow with joy in all our afflictions," — that was the paradox he achieved. And behold his Master and yours, the Man of Sorrows, perpetually bearing on His spirit all the pain and the evil of the humanity amid which He tabernacled. Yet His life among men radiated such a brightness that, at His going, He could leave no more precious bequest to His disciples than "that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be

fulfilled." And it is for us to-day, while sharing most intimately in the great world-fellowship of suffering, to confound the powers of evil by proving them impotent to conquer our Christian joy.

Do you say, perhaps, that you have not lost the Christian joy, that even in these days it is your underlying strength; but that the surging sorrow and sadness have for the time buried it out of sight, as winter drives the life back into the trees without destroying it? Brethren, to be "more than conquerors" it needs that your joy shall not only persist, but triumph. Sorrow we cannot escape, since we are human; joy we cannot lose, if we are Christian; but that the joy shall ever be dominant, — this is the mark of super-victory. "Sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing," is St. Paul's record, not "rejoicing, yet always sorrowful." In my student days there was a joking controversy in the University about the hat-ribbon of a certain College, as to whether it was two blue stripes on a white ground, or three white stripes on a blue ground! Merely, you say, two ways of describing the same thing; the colour proportions are the same either way. Maybe; but in the colour mingling of life it makes all the difference which to you is the ground, the norm, the permanent, and which the imposed, superficial, transitory. All of us recognise a mingling of the divine and the human in life; but we fall into two fundamentally different classes according as we regard the ribbon of life as having a human ground patterned by interpositions of the Divine, or as being something divine with the human laid on. And similarly it makes all the

difference at such a time as this, whether, however, the broad stripe of sorrow may darken it, life in its substance and texture is still joy.

Do you say that joy is not to be commanded by effort, — that to *bid* us " alway rejoice " is like bidding us be always in the sunshine? True: joy, to be real, must have realities to feed on. But that is just the case here! Since the " good tidings of great joy " came, the sun *is* always shining! For Christ, for St. Paul, for the Early Church, the joy-giving facts of the redeemed world were incomparably greater, solider, and more abiding than all that lay in the balance against them. And the same is true for us, even in these days. All the great treasure are still ours. That God has so loved the world as to give His only Son for it; that Jesus has trod this earth and still belongs to it, from generation to generation by His living presence; that His blood has been shed for sinful men, and His love still embraces them all; that the Kingdom of Heaven has begun — these are truths which make it good to be alive, good to belong to a world so dowered; they are truths which, rightly measured and held, make Life and Joy synonyms. And no mere event even the biggest, no course of circumstances even the most riotously and cruelly contrary, diminishes by a feather-weight these once-for-all given joys. " Can the sons of the bride-chamber mourn," Jesus asked, " so long as the bridegroom is with them? . . . I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no one taketh from you. . . . Lo, I am with you all the days, even unto the end of the world." Let " the joy of the Lord " have its rights,

and it will transfuse and transfigure even the gloom and the pain of this dark day.

Nor is this the whole account of the Christian joy; to claim that it outweighs all the sorrow, is only half the truth. The New Testament teaches that we are to rejoice not only in spite of the trials, but positively because of them. Its arithmetic of Sorrow and Joy is not that Sorrow deducted from Joy still leaves a balance of Joy; it *adds* Sorrow to Joy, and arrives at a total of enhanced Joy! "*Count it all joy*," says St. James, "when ye fall into manifold trials." Trials to be entered in the Joy column of the account — how may that be? St. James, St. Peter, St. Paul all utter the same paradox, and give the same solution of it. The secret is that "tribulation *worketh*," "our light affliction *worketh*," "all things *work*"; and all their working is to produce good. The sufferings are so many joy factories; for the present seeming to be grievous, they are on their way to yield good fruits. "When ye see them approaching," said the Master — even the most tremendous of them — "look up, lift up your heads!"

Does it seem to you to be asking too much of faith to-day to call upon it to see promise of blessing and joy in events so manifestly due to the Powers of Evil working their will? Think, brethren, whether the Apostles' faith had not to answer that same demand. All their trials, they vividly realised, were due to mighty "principalities and powers," to "world-rulers of this darkness" all but omnipotent. Yet by the eye of faith they could see those very trials "working good" for them. "All but omnipotent," we say of the powers of evil that are abroad

in the world to-day; but there is everything in that *all but.* It means that powers of evil are never able to "work their will"; they must always work God's will, and are forced ever, in their maddest outbursts, to be agents of His purposes of love. He who could use all the hosts of evil that concentrated toward Calvary, who made them the very implements of the world's redemption, how shall He not turn to our good these lesser (though still tremendous) ragings of our foes? It belongs to super-victory to recognise, even in our present distresses, that since God is God "all things" still "work together for good," that with every rising wave of the present tide of trials our redemption, and the world's redemption, "draweth nigh."

The material wealth of our nation, our rulers tell us, great as it is, must be husbanded if it is to stand the war-strain. The spiritual wealth of our joys needs no husbanding; for it is measureless, and even the things that seek to diminish are increasing its store. It is a well-spring, and the more it is drawn upon the more it flows. Be lavish with it, brethren, in these days, and "the joy of the Lord shall be your strength."

II

For a second field in which we are called to show ourselves more than conquerors, turn to a later passage of this Letter to the Romans, In the last verse of chapter xiii., among the rules of Christian living which the Apostle lays down, we read: "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

It is not evil in general he is thinking of; it would be the merest platitude to say, "Do not let evil overcome you." He refers, as the preceding sentences show, to a specific temptation, — the temptation to repay injury with injury, to meet enmity with enmity, to hate the haters. Hatred has a peculiarly contagious quality; we risk catching the infection of it not only from neighbours, but also from the enemies in whom we witness and condemn it. Lawful indignation at wrong-doing perpetually tends to pass into sinful enmity toward the wrong-doer. So the Apostle puts us on our guard against this danger: "Take care," he says, "not to get infected by enmity." But he adds a further Christian command: to be proof against enmity ourselves is not enough, he challenges us to a far harder achievement; he seeks the cure of it in the plague-centres from which it threatens us. "Be not overcome of evil" —that is victory; "overcome evil with good" — this is super-victory.

Which of our hearts does not acknowledge the tremendous temptation to be "overcome of evil," in face of the swarming infamies and outrages of this time? Some religious people indeed have given up the struggle and, with Old Testament excuses, let themselves go in "hating with a perfect hatred" those whom they conceive to be monstrous ill-doers. Those, however, who still try to be Christian even in these anti-Christian times, hear amid all the din the high challenge of Matthew v., the noble music of 1 Corinthians xiii.; for their living Lord's sake, they dare not yield to hatred of those for whom He died. Yet the struggle is a hard one, — is it not, brethren?

So to resist the tides of passion as not to become blind and deaf, unreasoning, undiscriminating; to keep our indignation so pure that it does not corrupt into lust of vengeance; in all our hatred of the sin, to stop short of hating the sinner, — this, in the extreme temptation we are subjected to, will be real and notable victory.

But such victory, hard as it is to win, is not enough. In this thing too, we have to be "more than conquerors," if we are to meet the call of the present and attain the rich possibilities of the future: "*overcome* evil with good." We are not only to keep free from hatred ourselves, but to overcome and cast out the hatred that is in our enemies! And there is only one thing, St. Paul tells us, that can overcome and quite cast out hatred: overcome hatred with LOVE. Love, thank God, is contagious, as well as hatred; and it is one of the peculiarities of this form of evil that it is only to be conquered and annihilated by its opposite. Hatred is not to be cured by reproof or disgust, nor by punishment and repression; the sovereign, specific remedy for hatred is *love*. The world-future which we are all longing and praying for, is a future not only of freedom from wars; it is the age in which, somehow, the world shall have recovered real harmony and brotherhood. And only in one way can this come to pass. No signing of treaties by plenipotentiaries, however plenipotent, will establish Spiritual Peace among those who are now our foes. Love is the only power on earth or in heaven that can inaugurate such a peace. To say this is not to declare the flesh-and-blood warfare futile, and therefore unjustifiable. War will not,

we may freely grant the pacifists, change men's hearts from hatred to amity; but it may, none the less, have high and sacred functions. It can but prepare the way for the work of Love; but it may be — to-day we are profoundly sure it is — an indispensable, and therefore a divinely sanctioned, preparation. Granting the stern necessity of fighting, by no conceivable process can right relations be established between us and our enemies till we succeed in *loving* them.

This then is one branch of what it means to be "more than conquerors." The victory of repressing anger, loathing, ill-will towards the evil-doers is only a preface to the higher victory of loving them with the love that shall overcome their evil. It is not St. Paul's word only, but our Master's too. He is not content to say: "Be just to your enemies"; nor even, "Be merciful to your enemies"; nor even, "Forgive your enemies." He demands from us the super-victory, "*love* your enemies!" What does it mean — loving such enemies as these? It means something that the mother-heart understands, that the brother-and-sister-heart understands. It does not mean approval, nor liking; it does not condone wrong-doing, nor hesitate, if need be, to chastise; it is even consistent, in extremity, with the compulsion of war. But the mark of this love is that it keeps alive the sense of kinship; it is the *family-love*, the feeling which in the breast of the mother, in the heart of the true brother or sister, survives wrong, injury, depravity, even loathsomeness, because the offender is of one's flesh and bone, is inextricably, inalienably, *our own*. Such love

cannot lose, under whatever stress of righteous anger and loathing, the family-longing for the well-being of all the members of the family. Brethren, we are abandoning the very elements of our Christian faith, and hope, we are denying our Lord more profoundly than Peter ever did, if in spite of everything we do not strive to maintain toward our enemies such love as this. I am not concerned to minimise the evil-doing. Neither we nor any of the warring nations are at present qualified, either as regards knowledge or calmness of temper, to estimate each other's conduct judicially; but even if history should ratify in every particular our present condemnation of our enemies, the duty of love toward them stands uncancelled. The goal of this love is always salvation, not destruction; its instruments may be peace or war, chastisement or mercy; but, whatever the process, its aim will never cease to include the true welfare of the offender and the healing of the broken family unity.

How is this super-victory of Love to be won? There is one sure way. Do not get "separated" from "the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." If "He loved *me*, He gave Himself for *me*" is real to you, "He loved *them*, He gave Himself for *them*" must be true also; and His dying, living Love, embracing you and them in one, must needs make them, however grievously erring, your kin. In this love, "which is in Christ Jesus," shall the hate which is rampant in the world to-day be conquered and the true "peace on earth" be won.

III

A third sphere in which I want to challenge you to super-victory lies in what St. Paul speaks of at the end of 1 Corinthians xv. as *the work of the Lord.* The war has peremptorily summoned all our pre-war interests and activities to justify themselves or to disappear; and our religious interests and activities have not escaped the tribunal. The newspapers and the statesmen reiterate to us that the one business of to-day, to which everything else whatever must come second, is " to win the war "; and the claim finds response not only in our patriotism, but in our soberest and most religious estimate of the situation. What, then, of the primacy we used to claim for the concerns of the Kingdom of God? The industry and commerce of the country, its education, its art, its amusements, have had to undergo sweeping readjustments; they are expected to sacrifice everything which cannot prove itself to be a vital national necessity. The whole face of life has changed for the nation; must not " the work of the Lord " submit to the same compulsion? Articles in newspapers and magazines have not been wanting which have declared it treachery to the national cause to be spending money, at such a time as this, on converting the heathen.

Now I am not going to suggest that there is any super-victory in withstanding such attacks on the work of the Lord as these. Before any serious and competent public tribunal to-day, that " work of the Lord " will find assent to its largest claims of being " a vital national necessity." The lessons of these

tragic months make all thoughtful men desire to have the religious forces animating the nation's life not weakened, but strengthened; they must wish to see the spread of the moral and spiritual power of the Gospel in non-Christian lands hastened, and not suspended. If the nation must be fed even in war-time, if friendly relations with neutrals must be maintained even in war-time, it is no less imperative that the nation's religious life shall not be starved in war-time, and that the supreme duty of Christian toward non-Christian peoples should still be fulfilled in war-time. Aye, one may go further than this. To speak of the interests of religion having to justify themselves at the bar of national necessity is an inversion of the true order. For the Christian the Kingdom of God, to-day as ever, stands FIRST: Nation, War, everything else, must justify themselves at its bar, rather than summon it to theirs. If we assent to the claim of our national leaders that the one business of to-day is " to win the war," this is not because we admit that any kingdom of earth, even our own dear country, may take precedence, in whatever emergency, of the Kingdom of Heaven; it is because we are profoundly convinced, with a conviction as religious as it is strong, that the work of trying to win this war is work for the Kingdom of God, that all the dearest interests of religion, for us and for the world, are involved in the present dreadful struggle.

I am not dealing, observe, with the question of individual duty in these strange times. Whether you, minister or layman, are still to serve the Kingdom of God in the old ways of service, or whether

the exigencies of the time call you to some new path — that is a question between you and God who will make His will clear to each of us, if our eye be "single" and our ear open. What I am concerned to emphasise is, that the primacy of religion is in no degree invalidated or suspended by the new claims; that in Church and in State, in war as in peace, whether God's immediate calling be civil or military, the rule "seek ye FIRST the kingdom of God and His righteousness" has lost no jot or title of its range nor of its force.

But if it is, or ought to be, comparatively easy for us to continue to give "the work of the Lord" its right place in our scheme of things, it is not so easy, in days like these, *to keep heart and hope concerning it.* It is here that, in Paul's name, I would summon you to strive together with me to be "more than conquerors." Can "the work of the Lord" escape serious detriment in such times as ours? Already, before the war, its burden seemed almost greater than the Church could bear, and its progress seemed painfully uncertain and slow. And now suddenly has come this tremendous addition to the task, this enormous new call on mind and heart and strength. Is it not inevitable that the old enterprises of the Kingdom of God should be hampered, crippled, drained of life-blood? Must we not endure to see grievous delay, if not disaster, befalling those great efforts for the welfare of man and the glory of God that were the business and the passion of our life? Here on the mission-field, how many hopes have already vanished at the touch of the war, how many cherished plans have gone into the waste-paper

basket, or at best into the pigeon-hole! how many new fears and threats have been added to the ever present swarm of such! By the goodness of God the income of the Missionary Society has been wonderfully maintained; but in the lean years stretching before us, where is the money to come from? With the young manhood of the home-lands so terribly depleted, where are the recruits to be found? What least hope is there of the new armies that, before the war, we were insisting that the home Church must send us? And the problem is no less serious for our people at home. In all regions of Church life, shortage of workers is compelling resort to makeshifts which two years ago would have been scouted as fatal to the existence of the Church. A multitude of embarrassments and disabilities are already felt; and while the present situation is strange to the point of bewilderment, the future is uncertain past all conjecture. What is to happen to " the work of the Lord "?

Concerning all this, hear the word of the Lord by the mouth of His servant Paul. " Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." In the distractions and threatenings of these days, it may be reckoned victory to persist in the work of the Lord with any heart, any faith, any hope; but the Apostle summons us to a super-victory; he challenges us to be, in face of it all, " steadfast, unmoveable, *abounding* " — running over, exuberant, buoyant, exultant — " in the work of the Lord." Have you mettle — that is to say, grace — for this

abounding, brethren? or would you rather argue that such words cannot have been meant for the unparalleled extremity of to-day? But remember where those words stand. In 1 Corinthians xv. St. Paul confronts "the work of the Lord" with its mightiest enemy — *death*. The worst that human mischief can do to hinder that work is gathered up, and exceeded, in the pervasive, perpetual, inexorable operations of that "last enemy," the Grand Interferer in all labours for the good of mankind. Yet when St. Paul in this chapter measures, analyses, follows to its ultimate issues, the work of Death, the result is a shout of triumph: "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory!" For what has he seen? — he has seen that through Christ's triumph over death, that consummate product of sin is no longer a defeater of God's purposes and destroyer of His handiwork, but an agent and fulfiller of them. So far from spoiling our human endeavours, Death has become a messenger for transmitting them to a higher plane of achievement, for transfiguring them to immeasurably nobler uses. Death the Barrier, Death the Frustrater, is gone; and instead we are introduced in this chapter to Death the Sower, Death the Quickener, Death the liveried servant and apparitor of Life! No need to lose heart, says the Apostle, through fear of the doings of Death. He is ultimately to be "swallowed up"; and meanwhile he is forced to further the work of the Kingdom. However death may seem to spoil it, "your labour is *not in vain* in the Lord."

Brethren, all the perils and the trials, which confront the work of the Lord to-day were faced by

implication, in 1 Corinthians xv. If death, the greatest product of sin, has been subdued to be a helper of the Kingdom, shall not the minor manifestations of evil, tremendous though they seem in their present onset, be also forced to contribute to "the furtherance of the gospel"? He that conquered death on the Cross, how did He not, with death, utterly conquer all things? Brethren, Christ's triumph on Calvary covers all that is happening in Europe to-day; every horror, every threat of it was in that "sin of the world" which the Lamb of God so wondrously "took away," transforming it from hinderer into baffled, unwilling furtherer of the progress of the Gospel. Taking full measure of the present insurgence of evil, we may yet join in Paul's triumph-shout: "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory!" We may *abound* in the work of the Lord, assured that our labour is not in vain in the Lord.

There is a fundamental fallacy underlying all the calculations we were making a few minutes back about the prospects of God's work, abroad or at home. It may be called the Fallacy of Limited Resources. We were reckoning as if the old resources of pre-war days had now to be applied to the enormously increased task; aye, as if even those old resources were being terribly reduced by death and destruction. That is a crude, unspiritual way of reckoning. Get St. Paul's wide perspective, and you will discern that there are always unlimited reserves available for the Divine campaign; and this outbreak of evil and suffering, if it uses up some of the old resources, must needs (Calvary means no

less) operate mainly in calling out the overwhelming reserves of the Lord *of Hosts*. In how many directions the war-upheaval has discovered to us spiritual powers and possibilities, in ourselves and others, we had never suspected before; how many a youth we had written off as wastrel has proved to have the makings of a hero! How the nation, that many who loved it feared was vitally infected with the materialism of wealth and pleasure and pride, has proved, when the call came, capable of high resolve and costly self-sacrifice and hard self-repression and stern determination! How the other nations, larger and smaller, have amazed us by the revelation of moral and spiritual capacities, which their most sanguine admirers would not have cared to claim for them two years ago! I have found it a good cure for the doubts and fears that assail one in this strange new time, to compile a " Windows of Heaven " list — a list, that is, of the happenings of this past eighteen months, public and private, individual and collective, regarding which, if any wild dreamer had suggested them two years ago, we should all have said, " If the Lord should make *windows in heaven*, might these things be? " Into that list, for instance, at the tail of scores of other " impossibilities," goes the fact that the Wesleyan Missionary Society, after eighteen months of war, has an income that breaks all records! This catalogue of wonders cries aloud, in every item, how inexhaustible are the resources which God has at command for our deliverance and for His Kingdom's work.

One of the greatest scientific discoveries of recent years is that of the potentialities of *the atom*. The

atom used to be reckoned the limit of all that was negative, empty, inert; modern research has found it to be a miracle of compressed energy, a mere speck of radium, for instance, having the work-capacity that we had associated with tons of coal. This is a parable for the spiritual realm. Have you been reckoning yourself a thing of infinitesimal capacity? reckoning your Church — all the Churches, perhaps — as near exhaustion-point? It is the business of such times as these to reveal that where you read "infinitesimal," God reads "infinite"; that from what you reckon effete, God can call forth most various and copious energies. "Thou worm Jacob, . . . I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff"!

For God's work there are always energies enough at hand. If they seem to fail in one direction, it is only that they may be developed in another; if some great new demand is made upon them, it is that the demand may elicit the supply. The Lord God Almighty is Unfailing Master of the Situation. He "wanted" this war as little as we did; but do you suppose it took Him by surprise, or found Him unprepared? His munitions are always ready, stored — little as we dreamt it — in us, in His Church, in His manifold creation. In His Great War the "initiative" (to use to-day's jargon) never passes to His enemies; every movement of events is a step toward His victory. Our strategists count much on the "attrition" of our enemies' forces; we look eagerly for the day when their numbers shall be too

few for their far-extended line. In God's warfare such calculations are always irrelevant. Let the line stretch wide as it may, let the assault intensify to the utmost that the powers of hell can do, He still has the overwhelmingly superior forces; and "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh!"

"Shortage," then, is a word not needed in the vocabulary of God's work. If it be the case that what we have reckoned the regular channels of missionary income are to run low, who knows what hitherto hidden springs of income He designs to open? or what more likely than that He means to give us a much-needed lesson in the insignificance of money — means to show us that He can gloriously prosper His work, though what we have deemed indispensable is lacking? Does it seem that for years to come the Home Churches will be able to spare few men and women from their depleted ranks to carry on the campaign of the Kingdom abroad? "God is able from these stones to raise up" workers for His cause; or He is able to make *thee* — "thou worm Jacob" — worth a hundred workers, where thou hast been barely worth one! In our Old Testament lesson-book of His ways, we find Him once reducing His army to a mere handful before He would use it, and more than once or twice winning great victories while His human armies "stood still and saw the salvation of God." Does it appear that, through the world-revolution that is happening, the routine of church order and work is being startlingly upset, machinery that we had painfully constructed for our needs thrown out of gear and perhaps doomed to the scrap-heap, religious life taking new shapes,

speaking with new accents, maintaining itself by all sorts of make-shifts? Is the whole garden of our pre-war plans and hopes withered to a barren, uncharted land of bewilderment? But what were our petty hopes and plans, to the infinitely various resources of His mind and His power? What do our methods and machinery and routine matter, while "in Him is LIFE"? Certain it is that in recent generations we have come to attach monstrously exaggerated importance in God's work to the human factor; and it may well be that one of the uses He designs to make of this outbreak of evil is, to give us lessons in the majesty and the might of His sole, sovereign working.

All this region, it is true, is one of conjecture; but there are some things Paul would bid us firmly hold as certainty and not conjecture. That God can provide for His work, and purposes to provide for it, if not just as we ask and think, then "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." That all the stress and distraction and change of this time need not mean — cannot mean — damage to any real interest of the Kingdom. That, on the contrary, the more the powers of evil stir themselves up to war against God, the more swiftly and mightily His victory is on the way to be won. That, as the war has revealed in a score of directions, there are reserves of spiritual capacity, in us and in humanity vastly beyond all that the service of God and man has yet called forth from us. That, to sum it all up, in a redeemed world the utmost raging of the hosts of wickedness is turned about to hasten that very consummation of redemption which it seeks to

hinder. These, brethren, are "days of the right hand of the Most High," and "Thy right hand, O Lord, is glorious in power." Nothing is here for dismay, nothing for faltering; so far from assuming defeat and disaster, or even stagnation and delay, for the work of God, these are the very days to "expect great things from God and attempt great things for God." "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always *abounding*" — with the energy of exultant, expectant confidence — "in the work of the Lord"; and so shall ye be more than conquerors.

Our text has challenged us, brethren, to great exploits, to things wholly beyond achievement — except on one condition. But there is one gift of God — a gift offered to us all — through which the three achievements that we have been looking at, and many others that belong to St. Paul's experience of super-victory, become natural and even easy; "this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even OUR FAITH." All the hard things I have been urging are made easy by faith — faith, that faculty of spiritual sight which realises the Unseen. Not the future, heavenly Unseen alone, but the present, omnipresent Unseen, the underlying, over-arching, enveloping, penetrating, pervading Unseen: the Unseen which, when your eyes open to it, makes the blustering and impertinent Seen dwindle to its true size and retreat to its proper place. This realising of the Unseen transforms the world-situation. To faith, for instance, hugeness, bulk, numbers simply do not count. Measured against the infinite,

faith's standard, they are mere irrelevancies. The nightmare horrors of suffering and evil that are about us to-day raise, for faith, no question concerning the wisdom, power, or goodness of God that was not raised when the first sparrow fell to the ground, when the first touch of sin fouled God's world; nor do they shake by a single tremor the glorious adequacy of the answer given to all our questionings in the gift of God's Son. And to faith, time is as irrelevant as bulk; for " the things which are not seen are eternal." Many of us have been disappointed to discover what the world is like in the twentieth Christian century. To faith there is no whit more evil in the world to-day than in quiet pre-war days. The world's evil has risen from the depths to the surface; it has come out into the open, where the good can get at it to conquer and cure it. But it was all there before. And if there be small comfort in that reflection, does not faith find comfort here, that the evil that appals us to-day has all along been naked and open to the eyes of God? It is this very world, known through and through, that He has so loved as to give for its rescue His only Son. He measured all the extent and persistence of its evil, He foreknew this present eruption of its sin and pain, when He moved holy men of old to pledge Him by great announcements and assurances of the complete triumph of good. To faith all the great unseen realities stand to-day as secure, as precious, as potent as ever. Does the highest foaming of Atlantic billows endanger the stars of heaven? as little — if faith has opened to us the door of the Infinite — does this present

upheaval and tossing of the world's waves endanger one of our, or the world's, real possessions. Let the waves splash their highest, the stars of our heaven still hold their place; "for that He is strong in power, not one is lacking." There is absolutely nothing in all the happenings of these two years that is entitled to raise either doubt concerning God, or fear concerning any good thing that He has promised us.

Faith, then, is the key to super-victory. Live in the faith-world, and life will be joy even in the midst of sorrow; for over all this round earth you will see REDEEMED, you will see GOD'S, engraved in characters so deep and clear that to-day's confusions cannot cancel nor hide one stroke of the inscription. Live in the faith-world, and more vital than all distinctions and relations "after the flesh"— of ally and enemy, Briton and German, and the like — will be the sense that all humans are souls that God has made and loves, that Christ has died for, and souls that we therefore must needs care for and cherish as our very selves. Live in the faith-world, and the onward march of the Kingdom of God will be to you, spite of all mysteries of apparent check and defeat, as sure as the progress of dawn to noonday, irresistible as that "word of the Lord" which "shall accomplish that which He doth please and shall prosper in the thing whereto He sent it."

Yes, you will perhaps say, "faith, mighty faith," would make us more than conquerors even in these times; but how to win such faith? Brethren, St. Paul in the verse where our text is, reveals that ultimate secret: "through *Him that loved us.*" If

faith is the clue to super-victory, these words are the clue to faith. When mariners are shipwrecked off shore, the rocket carries to them a slender cord, pulling on that they draw to them a stouter rope, and soon they are linked to the shore by a cable sufficient to bear them and their belongings safe to land through all the raging of the storm. It is such a life-line that Paul here throws out to us. "Him that loved *us*": in that pronoun is the kernel of Faith. Whatever is shaken to-day, whatever has yielded to doubt, whatever is hidden in the clouds of mystery rising from the world-explosion, you KNOW that Christ has loved you. There is bed-rock reality, a fact as sure to you as your existence. That Christ loves you has been spoken — *is* spoken — to the inmost of you by a voice that pierces clear and sweet, and more real than all reality through all the noises of time and sense. In that reality, brother, is the germ of the faith that conquers, and more than conquers, the world. Pull on that slender life-line: "He loved *me*, He gave Himself for *me*." It is a private faith, someone says, just individual, just personal and no more, — a precious something between my soul and Him: yes, but *pull* on it, draw out its meaning, its implications; and you will find it bring in its train a very faith-cable, strong to bear the burden of a thousand sin-wrecked worlds! He has loved *me:* the creature that I am; loved me with a love that saves, — that satisfies; a love that (I know it within) defeats sin and death, and means for me life — life eternal, life ever more abundant! Why, if this miracle of Love and Power toward me is fact — and again I claim, brethren, the witness of

your hearts that it is surer fact than the noonday sun — then no miracle, of all that a ruined universe may need, remains incredible. As the sky in a wayside pool, so the whole wonder of redemption is mirrored in my soul's experience. "Him that hath loved us — Him that hath loved us!" Go back there, brethren, "from the world of sin and noise"; take hold there. Let the humbling of it, and the amazement of it, and the joy of it, and the deep, sure peace of it, flood your soul again. And from the little redeemed universe of your own being you will return to face the great universe, and will see this too embraced (for to God nothing is great, and nothing is little) in those arms of Love and Power that compass you.

JESUS HATH DIED FOR YOU AND ME;
Believe — *and conquer all!*